













MAJOR ED. M. MAIN,  
Third U. S. C. C.

THE STORY

OF THE

Marches, Battles and Incidents

OF THE

THIRD UNITED STATES  

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**COLORED CAVALRY**

===== A Fighting Regiment in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-5. =====

With official orders and reports relating thereto,  
compiled from the Rebellion Records.

BY

ED. M. MAIN, Late Major,  
NEW ORLEANS, - - - - LOUISIANA.



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# THIRD UNITED STATES COLORED CAVALRY

## ORGANIZATION.

Pursuant to the call, of date May 5, 1893, the following surviving officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, met in club room "A," Grand Pacific Hotel, Chicago; Lieut. Col. J. B. Cook, Majors Charles H. Chapin and Ed. M. Main; Captains Andrew Emery, C. C. Spaid, Randolph Grimes, Benjamin S. Wing and Howard Cook; Lieutenants Frank W. Calais, Edwin Farley and Fred Fernald, and proceeded to organize as the "Third U. S. Colored Cavalry Organization," electing the following officers to serve one year:

President, Lieut. Col. J. B. Cook; Vice President, Major Charles H. Chapin; Treasurer, Lieut. Edwin Farley; Secretary, Lieut. F. W. Calais; Historian, Major Ed. M. Main.

### BOARD OF REFERENCE.

Lieut. Col. J. B. Cook, Capt. Andrew Emery, F. W. Calais.

The following address, by Major Ed. M. Main, was then ordered to be made part of the record and published in connection with the by-laws, which were adopted for the guidance and control of this organization.

### ADDRESS.

*Mr. President and Comrades:*

That the colored troops acquitted themselves with credit, has been fully demonstrated, and that the success they achieved was due to the patriotism and unflinching bravery of their white officers, must also be admitted.

It is needless to say that without efficient white officers the experiment with negro troops would have been a total failure.

The officers of negro troops have not received the credit to which they are so deservedly entitled, and for which the great service they rendered to the country in its darkest hour of peril

demands. Rising above the storm of prejudice then prevailing against the negro troops, they came to the rescue at a time when the Union was tottering on the brink of dissolution.

Voluntary enlistments had ceased in the loyal States, and the Union army was wasting away before the invincible legions of Lee and Johnston.

Scattered, as it was, over a vast territory, the Union army was unable to face their opponents and, at the same time, hold the already subjugated territory. At this period of the war, the fact first dawned on the Northern mind that one of the greatest elements of strength the South possessed consisted in her slave population numbering four million souls, who tilled the soil producing the sugar, rice, cotton and corn that fed and clothed the confederate armies, and who also looked after the home interests while the entire white male population flocked to the support of the Southern standard.

But the usefulness of the negroes did not end here. In the capacity of pioneers and teamsters, in fact, performing all the various duties pertaining to an army, they formed a valuable auxiliary to the Southern cause.

Then the negroes were made the instruments for the destruction of the Union and for perpetuating their own enslavement.

It became apparent, therefore, that to save the Union, slavery must be destroyed.

The people of the North failed to comprehend the true condition of affairs, until they saw their own farms and workshops deserted in consequence of the heavy drafts made for men to fill up the depleted ranks of the Union army.

When the question of giving the negroes a chance to fight for their own freedom was at last determined upon by the Federal Government, a great howl of rage and indignation went up from the South, which, being echoed by their Northern allies, "Copperheads," aroused a bitter prejudice against the measure, which, spreading through our own army, created widespread dissatisfaction.

The idea of commanding negro troops was at first severely ridiculed, and the prejudice was so great that but few men could be found who possessed the moral courage to face the obliquy, which threatened to overwhelm all who accepted posi-

tions in colored regiments. There were, however, a few commissioned and non-commissioned officers in some of the white regiments, whose patriotism and courage could stand the test. These men, stepping into the breach, formed the nucleus of what ultimately became an army of nearly 200,000 well organized, finely drilled and highly disciplined troops. These troops, as fast as organized and equipped, took the field and, by their conduct under fire, soon won the respect of the whole army. The prejudice against them disappeared, at least in the army, and thereafter, white and colored soldiers fought side by side, mingling their blood in a common pool on many hard fought fields.

As this branch of the service grew in favor, positions in colored regiments were eagerly sought after. But as the standard of admission was high, many applicants suffered disappointment.

The officers of colored troops were selected from the best men in the white regiments, being chosen for their bravery and soldierly qualities. These qualifications being established by previous faithful and meritorious service in their old regiments, a rigid examination before a board of army officers, expert in military tactics, was required to test their fitness to command. Without these qualifications, influence had no weight in securing these positions, and it is not too much to say that in no other branch of the service did the officers reach a higher standard of excellence, and in patriotism and bravery, the officers of colored troops had no peers.

In the early days of the war, the South discussed the question of using the negroes as soldiers. But the proposition did not, seemingly, meet with general favor, through fear, probably, of trusting arms in their hands, and for the further reason that their services could be utilized in other ways with almost equal effect. The Southerner, true to the instincts of his chivalric nature, would shoulder his gun and fight valiantly, but he scorned the menial duty of driving teams and building breast works.

So all that sort of work was performed by the negroes, leaving all the white men free for duty in the ranks.

It is on record, however, that in New Orleans during the first days of the war, negroes were enlisted in the Confederate service, being organized into companies and regiments, armed and drilled.

In a letter to the Confederate Congress, under date of February, 1865, urging the enrollment of negro troops, General Lee said.

In answer to your second question, I can only say that, in my opinion under proper circumstances the negroes will make efficient soldiers. I think we could at least do as well with them as the enemy, and he attaches great importance to their assistance.

Under good officers and good instructions, I do not see why they should not become soldiers. They possess all the physical qualifications, and their habits of obedience constitutes a good foundation for discipline.

They furnish a more promising material than many armies of which we read in history, which owed their efficiency to discipline alone."

In the "Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. XLVI, p. 1315, we find the following:

CAMP FORTY-NINTH GEORGIA REGIMENT,  
NEAR PETERSBURG, *March* 15, 1865.

COL. W. B. TAYLOR,

*Assistant Adjutant-General:*

*Sir*—The undersigned, commissioned officers of this regiment, having maturely considered the following plan for recruiting this regiment, and having freely consulted with the enlisted men, who almost unanimously agree to it, respectfully submit it, through you, to the commanding general for his consideration:

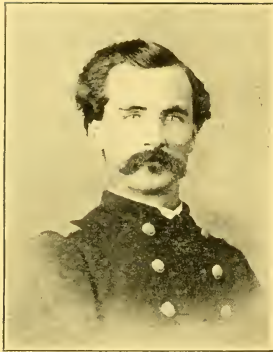
First: That our companies be permitted to fill up their ranks with negroes to the maximum number under the recent law of Congress.

Second: That the negroes in the counties of Georgia which our companies hail from be conscribed in such numbers and under such regulations as the War Department may deem proper.

Third: That after the negroes have been so conscribed, an officer or enlisted man from each company be sent home to select from the negro conscripts such who may have owners or may belong to families of whom representatives are in







MAJOR CHAS. H. CHAPIN,  
Third U. S. C. C.

the company, or who from former acquaintance with the men may be deemed suitable to be incorporated in these companies.

For the purpose of carrying out more effectually and promptly the plan as indicated under the third head, it is respectfully suggested that each man in the regiment be required to furnish a list of relatives, friends or acquaintances in his county of whom it is likely that negroes may be conscribed, so as to facilitate the labors of the officer or man who may be detailed to bring the negroes to the regiment.

When in former years for pecuniary purposes, we did not consider it disgraceful to labor with negroes in the field or at the same work bench, we certainly will not look upon it in any other light at this time, when an end so glorious as our independence is to be achieved.

We sincerely believe that the adoption throughout our army of the course indicated in the above plan, or something similar to it, will insure a speedy availability of the negro element in our midst for military purposes and create, or rather cement, a reciprocal attachment between the men now in service and the negroes highly beneficial to the service and which would probably not be otherwise obtained.

We have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

J. T. Jordon, *Colonel.*

J. B. Duggan, *Major.*

M. Newman, *Adjutant.*

L. E. Veal, *First Lieutenant Company A.*

L. L. Williams, *Captain Companies B and G.*

C. R. Walden, *Lieutenant Company E.*

A. G. Brooks, *Lieutenant Company F.*

S. J. Jordon, *Lieutenant Company H.*

Wm. T. Mullally, *Captain Company I.*

R. S. Anderson, *Captain Company G.*

---

(*First indorsement*)

HEADQUARTERS THOMAS' BRIGADE

March, 18, 1865.

Respectfully forward, Approved.

EDWARD L. THOMAS,

*Brigadier-General.*

*Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.**(Second indorsement)*

HEADQUARTERS WILCOX LIGHT DIVISION,  
*March 21, 1865.*

Respectfully forwarded, believing that the method proposed within is the best that can be adopted.

C. M. WILCOX,  
*Major-General.*

*(Third indorsement)*

HEADQUARTERS THIRD CORPS, ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA.  
*March 22, 1865.*

Respectfully forwarded.

The plan proposed is commended as worthy of attention and consideration.

H. HEATH,  
*Major-General, Commanding.*

*(Fourth indorsement)**March, 27, 1865.*

Respectfully returned.

The commanding general commends the spirit displayed by this regiment. The plan of organization which has been regarded most favorably proposed a consolidation of the regiments of ten companies, as they now exist, into six companies, and that the regimental organization be maintained by attaching to the six thus formed four companies of colored troops. Each regiment would then preserve its identity. Perhaps this plan would be equally acceptable to the forty-ninth Georgia Regiment.

By command of General Lee.

W. H. TAYLOR,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General*

WAR DEPARTMENT, C. S. ARMY,  
 ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
 RICHMOND, VA., *March 15, 1865.*

MAJORS J. W. PEGRAM AND THOMAS P. TURNER:

*(Through General Ewell.)*

Sirs:—You are hereby authorized to raise a company or

companies of negro soldiers under the provision of the act of Congress approved March 13, 1865.

When the requisite number shall have been recruited they will be mustered into the service for the war, and muster-rolls forwarded to this office. The companies when organized will be subject to the rules and regulations governing the Provisional Army of the Confederate States.

By command of the Secretary of War;

JOHN W. RIELY,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

---

Under the above mentioned law the organization of colored troops was commenced. But it was too late, the cordon was tightening around the doomed Confederacy. The closing scene at Appomattox was drawing near. We have never heard any disparaging remarks about negroes serving in the Confederate army. Had the South succeeded in putting her proposed 200,000 negro troops in the field, their praise would now be linked with that of the Confederate soldiers.

From a Southern standpoint, it was all right for the negroes to fight for the Southern Confederacy, but for them to fight for the Union and freedom, was held as a great outrage and an infringement on the divine rights of the South. The fact is, negroes have fought in every war this country has been engaged in, except, perhaps, the war with Mexico.

In the revolution, the negroes fought valiantly in the ranks with white soldiers, and in the war of 1812, at the battle of New Orleans, they fought shoulder to shoulder with the men from Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee and Louisiana, under that great Democratic soldier and statesman, Andrew Jackson.

The limit of Southern arrogance was reached when Jeff Davis issued his decree declaring negro troops and their white officers outlaws, placing them outside the pale of civilized warfare.

This inhuman act, followed by the Fort Pillow massacre, shocked the civilized world, and evoked a spirit that drove its author forth, shorn of his brief authority, a fugitive from justice.

The proverb, "Truth is mighty and will prevail", was never

more fully exemplified than was shown in the happy termination of the war.

That Divine Providence which shapes the destinies of men and of nations, through her chosen instruments, worked the slaves' redemption from bondage.

Speaking through the loyal hearts of the North, it was the inspired hand of Lincoln that penned the emancipation proclamation, striking the chains from four million human beings.

The black man's day of jubilee had come. John Brown's soul was marching on. The recruiting offices were thrown open for the enlistment of colored soldiers.

Did they improve the opportunity thus offered to strike a blow in their own behalf? Yea, the 186,097 enlistments that followed testify that they did.

The justice of emancipation was made manifest in the light of a new inspiration, crowning the Union arms with a succession of brilliant victories, which covered the slave oligarchy with confusion and irretrievable defeat.

Thanks to the spartan band of heroes who could not be swayed by fear, favor or prejudice, the work of enrolling colored troops went on apace; companies, regiments and brigades were quickly organized and equipped.

With but little instruction in the way of drill, these troops took the field, and while the country was debating the question, "will the black troops fight," the problem was solved at Fort Wagner, Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend, where they were pitted against the serried ranks of the Confederacy.

From these battle fields the report went forth, even from unwilling critics that "the colored troops fought nobly."

Being outlawed by the enemy, the knowledge that, if captured no quarter would be given, nerved your arm to strike for victory. Knowing what fate awaited you if overcome in battle no vision of prison-pens haunted your dreams.

Often far out in the enemies' country, surrounded by overpowering numbers, cut off from any possible chance of support, thrown upon your own resources, left to fight the battle single handed and unaided, knowing that you had a cruel and merciless foe before and around you. Yet undaunted you faced death

and, like brave men and patriots, conscious of the justice of your cause, trusted the issue to the God of battles.

When time shall have obliterated sectional prejudices, future historians, rewriting the story of the great struggle for national existence, will carefully adjust the scales of justice.

In one side will be justice, forbearance, and a due regard for the rights of mankind. In the other side will be injustice, arrogance and oppression, intolerance and cruelty, chains and slavery, and misery unspeakable mingled with the groans of captives in chains, the agonized cry of Union soldiers sick and dying in foul prison-pens, at whose sufferings pitying angels weep, and devils dance with glee. Which side think you, will receive the approving sentence, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant?"

Nearly all the white regiments have had written and published a history of the part they took in the great struggle. The services rendered by the colored troops have also been eloquently set forth by different writers.

In these latter publications, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry has received but a passing notice, while some of the colored regiments are given a prominence which places them in the front ranks of that veteran army.

Without detracting from the well-earned fame of any, we can confidently enter the lists and compete for honors with any regiment, white or black, that served in the Western army.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry enjoyed the proud distinction of being ranked among the finest cavalry regiments in the army of the Tennessee.

Many of its brilliant achievements are mentioned in general orders of the war department. The history of the regiment will show a long list of brilliant victories and no defeats. Its record is blameless, no stain dims the glory of its conquests. Though aggressive, the regiment never violated the laws of honorable warfare. It gave and took blow for blow. In a fair and open field the regiment acknowledged no superior. Before the whirlwind of its charge no equal number of troops could stay its course.

If an important point was to be held, requiring the highest standard of discipline and courage, the regiment was invariably

singled out for the duty. The reputation of the regiment was such that its presence at a critical time inspired almost unbounded confidence.

If the regiment was sent to perform a certain duty, or to hold a position, on the successful defense of which depended important results, no one doubted their ability to fulfill the trust if in the power of that number of troops to do so.

No enemy could surprise and raid a camp over which the regiment stood guard. No sudden onslaught of the enemy could break and stampede their lines; they might be driven back by overpowering numbers, but only after a stubborn resistance, retiring in good order.

The unflinching bravery of the officers and the high standard of discipline maintained, precluded the possibility of breaking their organization. On the retreat, the regiment was as formidable as when advancing. In point of discipline and ready control under all circumstances, no regiment approached a higher standard of excellence.

Whether leading the advance, standing in the deadly breach, or covering the retreat of a defeated and disheartened army, the regiment, with unbroken front, never wavered.

The black troops inspired by the dash and daring of their officers, seemed to rise equal to any emergency. The name of the "Black Regiment" was potent in the Mississippi valley. Its battle cry on a closely contested field, like the blast of Roderic's bugle horn, was worth a thousand men.

The enlisted men were far above the average of those in colored regiments. Having thousands of likely young colored men to choose from, none but the finest specimens of physical manhood were accepted, care being taken to enlist none but young, active men, of medium weight, regard also being had to a fair amount of natural intelligence. Physically, therefore, the enlisted men of the regiment approached as near to that standard of ideal cavalymen as has probably ever been realized. The majority of the men were mulattoes and in many of them the Caucasian blood predominated. They were superb horsemen, and yielding ready obedience to the requirements of military discipline, they soon become proficient in all the duties of a soldier.



When the story of the "Black Regiment" is written, the reader will have to stand with them and face the "Black Flag" and choose between victory and death. He will be called upon to accompany them in many midnight forays, where hand to hand encounters test the courage of the bravest.

He will be taken over the battlefields where the price of victory was half their number slain.

He will stand with them in the deadly breach, where the fate of an army hung on the issue. He will see the flash of their sabres on the hills of Woodville, and see them disappear in the smoke and crash of battle, and hear the shout of victory as they emerge with the enemy's guns.

He will go with them over the field of Franklin, where they met Wirt Adams' bold riders in numbers five to one. There the dead lay thick and some of their bravest souls took flight.

He must stand with them in the little earthwork at Yazoo City, where the ground was slippery with the blood of their fallen comrades, and listen to the ultimatum of the rebel commander, who speaking through a flag of truce, conveyed this message; "I have ordered a charge and no quarter will be given you." How you answered that threat, the dead that strewed the ground in front of the works attested.

Your valiant maintenance of that position was as heroic as the English defense of Lucknow. In that engagement you were outnumbered ten to one, opposed to you and completely surrounding your position, were eight rebel regiments, viz.: The 14th, 15th, and 17th Tennessee, the 3d, 6th, 7th, and 9th Texas and 8th Louisiana, with batteries on every hill-top trained upon your position, as shown by the official records of the rebellion.

If the reader's nerves can stand it, let him come with us down into the Cypress Swamp, on the banks of Boeuf River, and witness the night attack, when, under the silent stars of early morning, took place one of the most sanguinary conflicts of the war. Let him behold, in that one terrible hour of death and carnage, a scene which no pen can describe, no tongue portray, no brush transfer to canvas. Let him witness the lightning-like transition from quiet repose to the wildest confusion of deadly strife.

Grouped around their smouldering camp fires, unwarned of a lurking foe, waiting for the coming dawn, the black troopers were startled by the flash and report of five hundred guns, coming like a thunderbolt from a clear sky. The death-dealing missiles tore through their scattered ranks, as out from the dark shadows of the swamp their murderous assailants sprang upon them.

If the gates of hell should open before him, he would seek shelter within from the sulphurous storm raging without, where blazing shotguns, pistols and carbines light up the darkness with deadly flash, scorching the hair and burning the clothing. Obedient to the command of their officers, whose intrepid daring and coolness have never been surpassed, if equalled, the black troopers, rallying around their standard bearer, met the rebel onslaught, forcing them back at the pistol's muzzle. Stumbling over the prostrate bodies of friend and foe, guided only by the flash of the enemy's guns, the black troopers fought as men only can, who see death staring them in the face, with victory their only alternative. Hand to hand, breast to breast, fighting with the desperation of despair, friend and foe went down together, mingling their life blood in a common pool.

Loud above the din and clash of arms arose the rebel yell, as again and again they pressed forward, determined not to yield the fight to their hated black adversaries. From the deeper depths of the swamp came back the echo of the battle, mingled with the wild cry of the frightened night-birds, as from their lofty perch they flew, screeching, from the awful scene.

There the battle raged until, with the gray of the coming dawn, as though devil's work like this was for darkness only, the carnage ceased, the rebels disappearing in the dark recesses of the swamp, going as precipitately and mysteriously as they came, leaving their dead and wounded where they fell.

After the battle, the lifeless bodies of friend and foe lay scattered promiscuously over the field, rebel and colored soldiers lying side by side, showing that it had been man for man.

Around the lifeless body of a brave colored sergeant lay two dead rebels. The fact that nearly every commissioned officer in the command was wounded, proves the desperate character of the fighting and speaks volumes for the bravery of the officers.

Passing over many equally stirring events which mark the brilliant career of the regiment, let us review for a moment the assault on Black River Bridge, which for heroic gallantry, stands unparalleled in the history of the war. Major-General Canby in General Orders No. 81, dated December 9, 1864, said of this engagement:

"The Major-General commanding the District of West Tennessee and Vicksburg, styles this affair *as one of the most daring and heroic of the war.*" Two previous and well organized attempts by some of the best troops in the department, had failed to dislodge the enemy and destroy this bridge. That these assaults had been desperately maintained and that the bridge had been heroically defended, its blackened and bullet-torn timbers attested.

It was at a time when the rebel general Hood was concentrating his army for an attack on the forces of General Thomas, at Nashville. His means of obtaining supplies and reinforcements must be cut off, to effect which, the railroad bridge over the Big Black must be destroyed at any cost. From the previous vain attempts to dislodge the enemy from their strongly entrenched position at the bridge, it was well known to the District Commander that the bridge could only be taken by the most determined bravery and the sacrifice of many lives.

It was not so much a question of numbers to be brought into action as it was of the dash and mettle of those engaged.

It may, therefore, be considered as a high compliment to the officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, that they were selected to lead the assault. This bridge was situated in an almost impenetrable swamp, inaccessible, except over the narrow railroad bed, broken at intervals by trestle-work.

From the nature of the ground, the use of artillery was impracticable, leaving no alternative but a direct charge over the railroad ties.

The bridge was guarded by a force of rebel infantry, which was posted in an almost impregnable position, being protected by a strong stockade on the opposite side of the river, from which they could concentrate a deadly fire on the bridge without exposing themselves to danger.

Into the fiery jaws of this volcano the regiment was sent.

On that day, November 27, 1864, the regiment won imperishable fame.

From the Department Commander and from the war office in Washington, the regiment was complimented in the highest terms.

You who passed through that crucial test can never forget the experience. It is so indelibly impressed on our minds that, looking back even from this distance, we shudder at the picture memory retains.

Down there in that Mississippi swamp, we seem to see the black troopers as they appeared on that ever memorable occasion, crouched for the final spring. In the hard-set faces and stern commands of the officers we read a determination that foreshadowed victory.

It was understood by all that, when the bugle sounded the charge, there must be no faltering, no matter what might betide.

For the Third Cavalry this was the supreme moment—the crucial test. Great results were at stake. Much depended on the success or failure of the charge. Much was expected of the Third Cavalry. Would they sustain, under this trying ordeal, their high reputation for gallantry.

Let us follow them and see.

With every nerve strung to the utmost tension, the black troopers, when the bugle sounded the charge, sprang forward as one man.

Into the flaming crucible they plunged. The swamp resounds with the rattle of musketry and, as they meet volley upon volley, their lines tremble and sway like a young forest swept by a cyclone.

Do they waver? Is there confusion in their ranks? No, the gaps close up, their organization is intact. None falter but those who fall to rise no more. Surely none but the best of disciplined troops could face undismayed that storm of leaden hail.

Facing this deadly storm of buck and ball, with ranks thinned, they reach the bridge and, though swept by a murderous fire, they scale its dizzy height. With no footing but the railroad ties, they press forward.

Catching the inspiration of their officers, the black troopers

swept on with irresistible force. Pierced with bullets, men reel on the dizzy height and fall with a splash into the murky waters below. The survivors reach the opposite bank. The battle cry of the Third Cavalry rose above the din of the conflict. They close in on the enemy. Through the sally ports of the stockade they fight their way. A mighty shout rends the air. The enemy in terror flee to the shelter of the swamp. The victory is complete. The Third Cavalry has written its name high up on the roll of fame. It had passed through the crucial test, emerging as tempered steel.

The enemy had been routed from his stronghold. The bridge was destroyed. Nashville was saved. Hood's army was in retreat. Thomas, the "Rock of Chickamauga" has turned back an invading army. Another cherished scheme of the Confederacy had been crushed. The North had been saved from the ravages of an invading army. Thus the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry played a humble part in that great strategic movement on the checker-board of war, by which Sherman and his army marched through to the sea, severing the Southern Confederacy in twain.

This, gentlemen, is but a faint glimpse at the record of the regiment; when the whole is spread upon the pages of history, it will challenge comparison. The record of the regiment rests on well established and undisputed facts. Many of its deeds are chronicled in the official records of the war department. The light of criticism cannot fade it. Alongside the record of the famous regiments, whose deeds embellish the pages of history, the record of the regiment will lose none of its lustre.

This, comrades, is the common heritage of the surviving members of the regiment. It is yours to keep, defend and cherish and to transmit to your children.

All helped to make this record and all should share alike in its glory.

Though there were many deeds of individual heroism, yet they are infinitesimal in the light of the glorious whole.

The proudest distinction one can have is the enrollment of his name on the roster of its gallant leaders, whose intrepid daring inspired even the humblest private in the ranks to deeds of valor.

Gentlemen, we owe a solemn duty to the memory of our gallant comrades who fell in the strife. They were the bravest of the brave, the noblest and truest types of the American volunteer soldier. Midst the roar and smoke of battle they sealed their devotion to country with their lives.

Their heroic deeds form a part of the record of the regiment. In preserving this record, we honor their memory. The names of Stewart, Walter, Sedgwick, Starr and Pattengill are rendered immortal. You will find them inscribed on the roll of honor with this inscription; "Killed in Action."

Monuments of marble and granite decay and pass from the memory of men. But they have a monument more enduring than stone, their names are written in never fading letters on the tablets of time.

There are others, whose memory it is also our duty as well as our pleasure to commemorate; we see their names on the roster. But they are here only in the spirit, their lips are silent. Osband, Haynes, Hyland, Cook, Webber, Moon, Randall, Whiting, Lovejoy, Jennings, Freeborn, Beadles and Keith.

These are names that were once potent in council and in the field.

How often have we depended on the courage and fidelity of these men?

Were our positions reversed, were they assembled here instead of us, were they intrusted with the duty of keeping our memory green, think you they would hesitate in the work? Think you they would allow the memory of your heroic deeds to go out in forgetfulness?—No.

"The bravest are the tenderest,  
The loving are the daring."

Then let us erect an enduring monument to their memory. Let us leave a record of their heroic deeds. Let us tell the story of their sacrifices.

Let us honor ourselves by honoring their memory.

How often have we stood at the open grave of a beloved

comrade and, as the clods covered the lifeless form, renewed our unspoken pledges of loyalty to country and to each other?

Time cannot have made us insensible to the emotions which then filled our hearts. With the passing years, have their names and companionship faded from memory?—No.

“Nor shall their glory be forgot,  
While fame her record keeps.”





## PREFACE

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THE STORY OF THE BLACK REGIMENT IS THE HISTORY  
OF THE THIRD U. S. COLORED CAVALRY.

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### A FIGHTING REGIMENT.

This regiment sprang into existence at a time when the war spirit was at its height. It was born and cradled midst scenes of war. Its ranks were recruited and drilled under fire of the enemies' guns.

Reared midst scenes of blood and carnage, war had no terrors for the black regiment.

This regiment was recruited from the camp-followers of the Union army—the colored servants, cooks, hostlers, teamsters and pioneers.

Years of association with the army had familiarized these men with and inured them to the hardships and dangers of war, and though they had never actually borne arms, they were really old campaigners, being thoroughly conversant with all the duties of a soldier. Rendering in their humble capacity as servants such aid as they could to the cause of the Union and their own freedom, these men patiently bided their time, waiting for the opportunity to strike a blow in their own behalf.

At last the long looked for day of deliverance came. Light came out of darkness, through the smoke of battle and an almost dismembered union, the star of deliverance arose, lighting the way out of bondage.

A new nation was born, reaffirming the principles of free government, "that all men are created free and equal," making it so in fact as well as in theory.

The emancipation proclamation was written; at the stroke of the pen four million slaves were made free. The light of

christian civilization struck the chains from their limbs, and the armies of the Union enforced the decree.

Clothed with the right of citizenship, the ex-slave took his place in the ranks of the Union army. How well he performed his part the readers of these pages may judge.

It must, however, be borne in mind that these men had just been emancipated from the bonds of slavery, that their backs were yet smarting from the strokes of the lash, that the degrading influences of a century of slavery had left its impress upon them, that the sin of amalgamation had rendered their condition more and more unbearable.

Justice and humanity cried aloud for a stay of the curse of slavery and decency and virtue prayed for its extinction until at last the light of a better civilization burst upon the land.

To the slave the north star was as a beacon light of liberty, and when the tocsin of war sounded and the inevitable clash came they rallied around the flag of the Union.

For their soldierly behavior and heroic deeds, I will speak in terms of the highest praise. Their shortcomings, the result of previous conditions, I will cover with the mantle of charity.

Commencing with the organization of the regiment—starting at the little recruiting camp in Vicksburg, in October, 1863, and noting step by step the rapid rise and development of the regiment in the face of obstacles the most discouraging, we trace their progress from a mere squad of undisciplined recruits to a magnificent regiment of war worn and battle scared veterans.

We go with them from place to place—from camp to camp, and we bivouac with them on a hundred battle fields.

We are with them on all their weary marches. We pass nights in the saddle with them, reconnoitering the enemy's position, and striking blows that made the name of the black regiment famous in the Mississippi valley.

We join in the great cavalry raids, penetrating far into the enemy's country, following the retreating columns of the rebel cavalry, or falling back, sorely pressed, before overwhelming numbers.

We see them fall, bleeding, in the road, trampled in the dust as the enemy press forward. We are faint from hunger and thirst when they too are famishing.

We keep virgil with them away out in the front, where the enemy's camp fires gleam on the adjacent hills, and we share their hopes and fears for the morrow's strife.

We lose sight of them in the battle's smoke, and note their torn and bleeding ranks as they emerge from the conflict.

We stand with bowed head as the death list is told off and their names recorded with the slain.

Their warfare is over. The soldier's requiem is said.

"No vision of the morrow's strife  
The warrior's dreams alarms;  
No braying horn nor screaming fife  
At dawn shall call to arms."

We dug their graves by the road-side, in every valley and on every hill from Memphis, Tennessee to Grand Gulf, Mississippi.

Their blood has stained the soil of Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana..

Their battle cry has been heard on a hundred battle-fields.

They were always foremost in the van and the last to leave the field.

The blast of their bugles, the clang of their sabres and the gallop of their steeds have carried cheer and relief to many besieged garrisons and outposts.

Under the aegis of their flag the weak and defenseless never failed to find protection.

Before the fury of their charge the enemies of human rights quailed.

The regiment was not always victorious, it had its full share of triumphs and defeats, but it never became demoralized under fire; when compelled to retreat it invariably did so in good order.

After four years of fratricidal strife, drenching the land in blood, the Union was restored, coming forth from the baptism of blood cleansed and purified.

The flag of the Union was restored to every rebellious state.

The opposing armies, in submission to the eternal decree of right and justice, laid down their arms. The armies of the

Union dissolved, each individual member returning to the pursuits of civil life.

The white robed goddess of peace again resumed her sway.

The republic was rejuvenated, she had shaken off the incubus that degraded her civilization. From that day the American republic took an honored place among the great nations of the earth, moving forward on a higher plane in fulfillment of the great destiny lying before her.

In the heart of every American there is an abiding faith in the justice, stability and perpetuity of this republic, and they wear its shield on their breasts.

Whenever danger threatens, whether within or without our borders, Americans delight to rally around the old flag, and, standing like a living wall, shield it with their lives.

In 1861-2, as fast as the regiments were organized and equipped, how the men clamored to be led to the front, and with what devotion they rallied around the flag when in the wild storm of battle it was menaced, and how often midst the battle's smoke its staff has been wrested from the palsied fingers of the brave standard bearer, whose life blood stained its folds, and by another borne aloft through the thickest of the fight. Oh, what a flag it is.

The flower and pride of the nation rallied around it. A halo of glory encircled it. The spirit that brought it into being hovered near it, and well did the sons of our patriot Sires keep the trust confided to them.

“You'll carry the flag—the old torn rag—  
You'll carry the flag to the fore,  
Through the press and the strain, and the deadly rain,  
Where your fathers passed before.  
And you'll stand by the flag, when the faint hearts fly,  
And the best that you have you'll give,  
For the men who have learned for a cause to die  
Are the men who have learned to live.”

Ed. M. Main,

Major 3d U. S. C. Cavalry.

## THE BLACK REGIMENT.

“How the dusky legions, newly clothed with God’s eternal right,  
From out an hundred years of bondage, with its dark and cheerless  
night;

How upon the fields of cotton and upon the fields of cane,  
Through the swamps, upon the woodland, on the green and grassy  
plain,

On the field of bitter serfdom, when the master’s iron heel  
Crushed their lives in shapeless masses with bonds of woven steel,  
Here they met their old-time masters, not as serf or bonded slave,  
But full clothed in freedom’s garments, all the storms of war to  
brave,

Here they met midst cannons thunder and contending armies crash,  
And repaid with dripping sabre every stroke of cruel lash.

Here they rode midst smoke of battle, where the carnage greatest  
grew,

And their war cry grew the louder, though their ranks were growing  
few,

And they crushed the Southern legions as the whirlwind crushes  
grain,

For they rode on wings of vengeance—vengeance for their years  
of pain,

And they broke his ranks asunder as the sickle cuts the corn,  
For beyond the smoke of battle, where swift lightnings cut the  
gloom,

Broke the sun of freedom, shining brightly o’er black slavery’s doom,  
For the wheels of God’s just vengeance, rolling o’er the earth  
beneath,

Ground to dust the haughty Southern—crowned the slave with  
laurel wreath.”

By W. B. M.

## MAJOR E. M. MAIN.

Major Main was born at East Newport, Penobscot County, State of Maine, January 1, 1837. His parents moved west when he was a small boy, settling in Chicago, Illinois, where he grew up, attending the public schools.

Major Main sprang from puritan stock, being a lineal descendant of Governor William Bradford of Plymouth colony. His great-grandfather, Captain William Bradford, served in the Revolutionary war. His grandfather on his mother's side Putnam Wilson, was a captain in the war of 1812.

His people, both on the paternal and maternal side, have fought in every war this country has been engaged in. He enlisted under the first call for troops, April 19, 1861, in Barker's Chicago Dragoons, for three months, being the first company to leave Chicago for the seat of war. This company served as General McClellan's escort during that general's West Virginia campaign.

At the battle of Rich Mountain, young Main was detailed as special orderly to General McClellan, and carried written and verbal dispatches to brigade and regimental commanders, being frequently exposed on the firing line.

At the expiration of his three months' term of service, he re-enlisted in Company "A," Fourth Illinois Cavalry, but was almost immediately transferred to company "B," same regiment, to fill the position as First Sergeant.

For gallantry at the battles of Fort Donelson and Shiloh, he was commissioned a First Lieutenant, March 12, 1862.

He was several times wounded, the most serious being a gun-shot wound in right shoulder, and a compound fracture of right wrist, the latter received in a charge, his horse being shot and falling on him. He carries the bullet still in his shoulder, it being impracticable to extract it.

As a member of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, he shared in all the battles and campaigns of that regiment up to October 1863, when he resigned to accept a position as Major in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.

His career in this regiment is closely interwoven with the history of the organization. The command of the regiment frequently devolved upon him, notably on the great Grierson raid, December 1864, and January 1865, particularized by the battles of Egypt Station and Franklin, Miss., and the raid in north-east Louisiana and southeast Arkansas, February and March, 1865.

This sketch would seem incomplete without mention of the Major's steamboat episode. Standing, revolvers in hand, at the entrance to the cabin, screaming women and frightened passengers behind him, he disputed the passage of a band of ruffianly guerillas, putting them to flight, and saving the boat and passengers from being plundered. Himself simply a passenger on the boat, which had stopped at a remote landing place to take on a supply of fuel-wood, on the Tennessee side of the Mississippi river, in March, 1864.

The Major was badly wounded in this encounter, in consequence of which, he was carried from the steamer on a stretcher, on reaching Memphis, and taken to the officers' hospital, where he passed several uncomfortable months.





## CHAPTER I.

### THE CAUSES LEADING TO THE WAR.

The war of the rebellion had raged with increasing fury for two years, gathering force at every stage. Its dread alarms had filled the land with grief and lamentations, had cast its blighting shadow upon every hearthstone, left a wail of agony at every fireside, darkened every threshold and robbed every family circle of a father, husband, brother, or some dear relative.

Oh, the king of terrors was riding on the crest of a mighty wave of popular passion. The forces of a mighty revolution was at work.

The stability of the great American Republic was being tested. The Union was tottering on the brink of dissolution.

The people had been too long off guard. The watch fires of liberty had been allowed to smoulder. The sovereign rulers had been recreant to the trust bequeathed to them by the fathers of the republic. Yea, they had forgotten the watch word, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," and they were being punished for the sins of omission as well as for the sins of commission.

The Ship of State was sailing under false colors, she flew the pennant of freedom at her masthead, while millions groaned in chains.

She engaged in a piracy of human rights, convoying her slave ships from the African coast, freighted with human chattels.

The people sang odes of freedom to the flag while it waved over the slave ship, consigning untold thousands to captivity.

Thus the mockery of free government went on under the shadow of the slave-pen, the auction block and the whipping post, the civilized world looking on in disgust at such hypocrisy.

But there came a day when the public conscience revolted at the enormity of slavery and its baneful influences, threatening as it did, to subvert the tendencies of free government.

The people of the free or non-slaveholding States, rising in their might, entered a solemn protest against the further extension of the evil—slavery. But the slave oligarchy having grown rich and powerful in the traffic of human flesh, would brook no interference with their cherished institution. So they

raised the banner of revolt, seceded from the Union, renounced their allegiance to the federal compact, threw down the gauge of battle, and declared an independent government, naming it the "Confederate States of America."

The civilized nations of the world, witnessing the gradual decadence of slavery everywhere, looked on, amazed, at the attempt to establish in free America, a government dedicated to human slavery. But the Southern leaders, in their blind greed for power, coerced the Southern States out of the Union and prepared for war.

They seized all the United States forts and arsenals located within the boundaries of the Southern States, laid siege to and reduced Fort Sumpter.

The people of the non-slaveholding States rallied to the call of President Lincoln for troops to put down the rebellion and save the Union.

Armies were hastily organized and placed in the field. The first great battle was won by the seceders. The South was converted into one vast battle-field. The tramp of armed battalions resounded everywhere.

Mighty armies confronted each other, advanced, fought and retreated as each gained or lost the vantage ground.

It was a gladiatorial contest—a trial of giants, and the world looked on, amazed at the valor displayed on both sides.

At the end of two years, the South, though severely punished and her resources taxed to the utmost limit, remained defiant, when simultaneously two great events occurred which marked a turning point in the struggle. The defeat of the insurgent army under General Lee at Gettysburg, and the victory achieved by the Union army under General Grant at Vicksburg, gave hope to the supporters of the Union cause, and correspondingly dampened the spirits of the adherents of secession.

Yet these reverses seemed to spur the Southern leaders on to more desperate measures. Failing to carry the war into the North by way of Pennsylvania, they sought a route through Tennessee, looking with longing eyes toward the fertile fields of Indiana and Illinois, where they hoped to feed and clothe their hungry and tattered soldiers from the rich storehouses of these States.

But General Thomas, "the Rock of Chickamauga," barred the

way at Nashville. During the lull in military operations that followed the defeat of the rebel armies at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, the Southern leaders bent all their energies to the work of reorganizing their forces and preparing for an aggressive campaign. Conscript officers, backed by armed force, drag-netted the Southern States for recruits to fill up their depleted ranks.

The Confederate States Congress took action looking to the enrollment of the slaves as soldiers, it being proposed to put 200,000 negro troops in the field. These new levies were to be used for home defense, leaving the entire rebel army (white) to take the field, invade the North and strike a staggering blow to the Union. A great army was placed under the command of the South's most daring general, Hood, who was expected to break through the defenses of General Thomas, at Nashville, and invade the North, while the Confederate armies under Lee and Johnston were to hold Grant and Sherman at bay, but they reckoned without the cost.

At this stage of the war the emancipation proclamation having gone into effect, the recruiting offices were thrown open for the enlistment of colored soldiers, and the emancipated slaves rallied around the flag of the Union. At last the long looked for opportunity had come to strike a blow in their own behalf. Companies, regiments and brigades, like magic, sprang into existence. These troops, led by brave and experienced white officers, took the field, often forming the van-guard of the army. The transition from slave to citizen and citizen to soldier was most sudden and without preparation, and the country looked on, doubting the wisdom of such action, and standing ready to render a verdict of condemnation at the first symptoms of failure, while the declared opponents of the measure raised a great hue and cry against it, which engendered a bitter prejudice against the colored troops. But the men who had drawn their swords in defense of the Union were not to be turned aside by the clamor of a lot of sentimental weaklings.

The life of the republic was at stake. The lines on which the Union could only be saved, and permanent peace assured, was clearly defined, and on these lines and these only, the war must be

fought to a finish, or all would be lost in the general ruin that must follow the defeat of the Union cause.

So the organization of colored troops was pushed with the utmost celerity, and while the country was debating the question "will the colored troops fight?" the problem was solved at Fort Wagner, Port Hudson, Milliken's Bend and other places from which the report went forth, even from unwilling critics, "that the colored troops fought nobly."

In these engagements the colored troops led the attack, storming the enemy's works at the point of the bayonet, fighting hand to hand and falling where they fought.

"God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform,  
He plants his footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm."

At the very beginning of our government, the question of slavery was a troublesome one. The slave trade was then a source of great profit. Negroes were captured in Africa by slave traders and brought to this country in large numbers and sold into slavery. Many of these slave traders were men from New England.

Owing to climatic and industrial conditions, slave labor was not profitable in the New England States, and they sold their slaves to their Southern brothers, and then commenced the crusade against slavery.

Section 9, Article 1, of the constitution of the United States, sheds some light on the question of what the framers of that immortal document thought of slavery. It is as follows:

"The immigration or importation of such persons as any of the States, now existing, may think proper, shall not be prohibited by Congress, prior to 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importations, not exceeding \$10, for such person."

The foreign slave trade was then recognized as an iniquity to be tolerated only for a short time, as a political necessity.

In 1818 Congress prohibited the foreign slave trade, and in 1820 it was made piracy, punishable by death. Domestic slavery, however, continued and was in the fullness of time destined to be the cause of the greatest war of the centuries.

One of the greatest, if not the greatest, statesman of the South, said: "If I could be instrumental in eradicating from the con-





CAPT. B. S. WING,  
Third U. S. C. C.

stitution and laws of my country that greatest stain and blot, slavery, I would feel that I was entitled to greater honor than that ever bestowed upon any conquering hero or potentate."

There undoubtedly were those who honestly believed that slavery was a divine institution. The interstate traffic in slaves was viewed with abhorrence by many leading Southern men.

John Randolph, while upholding slavery, denounced the traffic. In 1818, free labor in the North and slave labor in the South were brought squarely face to face. Slave labor was fast rising in value. The new lands of the lower Mississippi opened a vast field for slave labor in the production of cotton and sugar. It was believed, says one historian, that "the extension of slavery into the territory would save it from gradual extinction."

In the course of time Missouri sought admission to the Union as a State. It was tacitly understood that slavery might be carried into the territory west of the Mississippi River. What was then known as Louisiana, belonged to the whole Union rather than to any one of the several States.

The question now arose whether Congress should establish slavery anew in territory of the United States. The alternative was presented by the South to the people of the North, whether to submit to these demands or consent to a dissolution of the Union.

In 1819, there were eleven free and eleven slave States. Missouri was pressing her claims for admission. Should she be admitted with or without slavery was the great question claiming the attention of the whole country.

James Talmadge, of New York, proposed that there should be no personal servitude in the States, except those already held as slaves, and that those should be manumitted within a certain time. Various plans and conditions were proposed, but Missouri was finally admitted as a slave State, with a proviso, however, known as the "Missouri compromise," providing that slavery should not exist in what was known as the "Louisiana Purchase," north of 36°-30 (the south line of Missouri) except in Missouri.

Henry Clay declared that this settled the slave question forever. Constant agitation was going on in the North. In 1831

Garrison's "Liberator" appeared in Boston. He advocated the immediate and unconditional emancipation of the slaves.

The passage of a new tariff law by Congress in 1833, came near precipitating a rebellion in South Carolina, but it was stamped out by the prompt and vigorous action of President Jackson.

In that year the legislatures of Northern States were called upon to pass laws to suppress anti-slavery societies by penal enactments. In many cities of the North and East, public meetings were broken up, newspapers destroyed and houses burned. Northern citizens traveling in the South were arrested, imprisoned and flogged for flimsy reasons.

Wm. Lloyd Garrison was dragged through the streets of Boston with a rope around his neck. Marius Robinson, an anti-slavery lecturer, in Mahoning county, Ohio, was tarred and feathered in a cruel manner; Amos Dressler, a theological student, while selling Bibles in Nashville, Tenn., was flogged in the public square because, without his knowledge, some of his Bibles were wrapped in cast off anti slavery papers. Elijah P. Lovejoy, at Alton, Illinois, was foully murdered while defending his press.

It was such demonstrations as these that aroused Wendell Phillips and caused him to give to the cause of emancipation thirty years of his great and moving eloquence.

Our war with Mexico grew out of the slavery question. Texas had been fighting for her independence, she desired the intervention of the United States in her behalf. Failing in this for a time, she sought the aid of England, stipulating in consideration of such aid, that she would remain independent and never become annexed to any other country.

England signified her willingness to aid Texas in securing her independence, but intimated a desire if such aid were given, that the proposed new republic (Texas) should abolish slavery within her territory.

The knowledge of this fact made the Southern statesmen even more anxious to secure the annexation of Texas to the United States as a field for the further extension of slavery.

The Mexican Government learning of the movement to annex Texas to the United States, notified our Government that such annexation would be considered as cause for war. The annexation



finally came, however, followed by war in which our soldiers won renown at Buena Vista and Monterey, and made General Taylor President of the United States. The poet Hoffman says:

“We were not many we who stood  
Before the iron steel that day;  
Yet many a gallant spirit would  
Give half his years, if he could  
Have been with us at Monterey.

Our banners on those turrets wave  
And there our evening bugles play,  
Where orange boughs above their graves,  
Keep green the memory of the brave  
Who fought and fell at Monterey.”

The annexation of Texas was a great triumph for Southern statesmen and the cause of slavery.

In 1847, the right of Congress to legislate on the question of slavery came up in connection with a bill for the establishment of a territorial government for Oregon. John C. Calhoun introduced his new slavery resolution declaring that the territories were common property and denying the right of Congress to prohibit slavery in the territories; and then began the agitation and debate which resulted in the repeal of the Missouri compromise.

Calhoun declared that the exclusion of slavery from any territory was a subversion of the Union, and proclaimed the separation of the Northern and Southern States as complete.

Again in 1850, when California sought admission to the Union as a State, the same bitter fight between the North and the South arose.

The “fugitive slave law” was passed about this time by Congress. Fugitives were to be surrendered on demand without the benefit of a trial by jury.

Any person assisting or harboring a slave was subject to a heavy fine and imprisonment for six months.

Jeff. Davis resigned his seat in the United States Senate to run for Governor of Mississippi, on a States Rights platform. He was defeated by his Unionist opponent, Foote. The sentiment was not unanimous either North or South.

Garrison was mobbed for preaching against slavery in Boston and Davis was defeated by Unionists in his own State.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" appeared about this time and did much to intensify the feeling between the two sections. A million copies of this book were sold in this country and Europe.

New men were now coming upon the stage of action. John C. Calhoun, the great apostle of States Rights and advocate of slavery, died in March 1850, and Daniel Webster and Henry Clay died in 1852.

In 1853, Stephen A. Douglass, of Illinois, reported his celebrated bill to organize the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, which formed the issues upon which the Democratic and Republican parties became arrayed against each other.

The passage of this bill caused intense excitement in the non-slaveholding States, and Mr. Douglass, as its author, was bitterly denounced.

He said that he traveled from Washington to Chicago by the light of his own burning effigies.

The controversy turned upon the following provision repealing the Missouri compromise: "which, being inconsistent with the principle of non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the states and territories, as recognized by the legislation of 1850 (commonly called the compromise measure) is hereby declared inoperative and void; it being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the constitution of the United States."

In the congressional session of 1857-8, Senator Douglass denounced and opposed the Lecompton constitution on the ground that it was not the act of the people of Kansas, and did not embody their will.

At the East, the line between Pennsylvania and Maryland, known as "Mason and Dixon's Line," and at the west, the line known as 36°-30 was considered the dividing line between freedom and slavery. To cross this line and remove all obstacles

against the extension of slavery was the object of Southern statesmen.

Douglass declared that the compromise of 1850, left the question of slavery to the people within the territory. His bill passed both Houses of Congress and was signed by President Pierce. It provided for the organization of two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, the slave question to be settled by the people of the territories. The repeal of the Missouri compromise resulted in the disruption of old party ties and many joined the "New American Party," sometimes called the "Know Nothing Party," which was organized in 1855, to check the influence of the Pope, purify the ballot and maintain the Bible in the public schools.

That year, 1855, the American party nominated Fillmore for President and adopted Southern resolutions, which the Northern delegates repudiated.

On the same day of the American party convention, a convention met in Pittsburg to effect a National organization of the Republican party, and called a National convention for June 17th. At this convention John C. Fremont was nominated for President and William L. Dayton for Vice President.

James Buchanan was nominated by the Democratic party, and elected.

Buchanan stood for the Southern States, Fremont for the non-extension of slavery, and Fillmore for the Union.

The repeal of the Missouri compromise and the opening up of Kansas to settlement resulted in a great rush of homeseekers to the new territory.

The town of Lawrence was organized and 8,000 people flocked in from the East, North and West. Meetings were held in Missouri in the slave interest, which pledged the State to send men to Kansas and remove all free State settlers.

At an election held in 1855, to elect members of the Territorial Legislature, armed bodies of men from Missouri took possession of the polls and the pro-slavery candidates were, on the face of the returns, elected. Of 6,218 votes polled only 1,310 were legally cast, and the Governor set aside the election, and a new one was held, resulting in the success of the Free State candidates.

The pro-slavery Legislature, however, met at Pawnee and expelled nine Free State members. The Free State Legislature met

at Lawrence and repudiated the pro-slavery Legislature, and called a State convention to meet at Topeka to form a State constitution. The pro-slavery party elected one Whitfield as a territorial delegate to Congress by more votes than there were names on the census list.

Rival territorial governments contended against each other, and discord, violence and crime prevailed. "Bleeding Kansas" became a National issue.

A committee of the lower House of Congress was sent to Kansas to investigate, and reported that every election had been carried by Missourians, and that the citizens of the territory had been prevented from exercising their rights, and that Whitfield had been elected to Congress by fraud.

About this time Horace Greely, editor of the New York Tribune, and one of the leaders against slavery, was brutally assaulted in New York.

In 1856 a free State Legislature and Governor was elected under the new Free State Constitution. President Pierce, however, recognized the pro-slavery Legislature and issued a proclamation commanding all armed invaders to disperse.

The Free State Legislature met at Topeka and inaugurated Robinson, Governor. In the spring of 1856, a thousand young men from South Carolina and Georgia, led by Colonel Buford, of Alabama, went to Kansas in military array and surrounded the town of Lawrence, capturing it and destroying the hotels, printing offices and the Governor's residence. The acting Governor proclaimed the territory in a state of rebellion. Large pro-slavery forces were gathered at Lecompton and Santa Fe. Seven men were killed at Osawatama, one of them a son of John Brown.

The Free State Legislature was dispersed by Federal troops.

The town of Osawatoma was destroyed by Missourians.

The Federal administration was in sympathy with the pro-slavery party, but Kansas, according to Horace Greely's expressive phrase, was steadily hardening into the bone and sinew of a Free State.

The actual settlers were largely Free Staters and were doing nearly all the clearing, plowing and planting.

In 1857, James Buchanan, in his first message to Congress, repeated the assurance that the discussion of slavery had come to

an end. He declared in favor of the admission of Kansas under such constitution as its citizens should adopt. He also referred to the forthcoming decision of the United States' supreme court, with which he had been made acquainted in advance, in the Dred Scott case.

An action had been begun in Missouri by Scott, a negro, for the freedom of himself and children. He claimed that he had been removed in 1834 by his master to Illinois, a Free State, and afterward taken into territory north of the Missouri compromise line. Sanford, his master, replied that Scott was not a citizen of Missouri and could not bring action, and that he (Scott) and his children were Sanford's slaves. The lower court differed, and upon an appeal to the supreme court, Chief Justice Taney in rendering the opinion of the court said: "The question is whether that class of persons (slaves) compose a portion of the people, and are constituent members of this sovereignty. We think they are not included under the word citizen in the constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges of that instrument."

They were at that time considered as a subordinate and inferior class, who had been subjugated by the dominant race, and had no rights or privileges but such as those who held power and the government might choose to grant them. That the act of Congress which prohibited a citizen from holding property of this kind north of the line mentioned is not warranted by the constitution and is therefore void." This decision made slavery the organic law of the land. No restriction of it could constitutionally be made by Congress in any of the territories.

Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, became a candidate for the United States Senate, against Stephen A. Douglass, in 1858, on a platform against the further extension of slavery, and in his opening speech at Springfield, Illinois, declared, "that this government cannot permanently endure half slave and half free."

Governor Seward, of New York, four months later, voiced the same sentiment when he said: "These antagonistic systems are continually coming into close contact. It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become either an entire slave holding or entirely a free nation."

In 1859, Kansas adopted an anti-slavery constitution by a large majority, and in 1861, was admitted into the Union as a Free State.

In October 1859, John Brown, of Osawatoma fame, made his celebrated but abortive attempt at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, to free the slaves, by inciting an insurrection. Not a single negro, however, rose at his summons.

Colonel Robert E. Lee was sent by the Washington authorities to suppress the insurrection, and Brown and his men were captured and turned over to the Virginia State authorities and tried for attempting to incite an insurrection of the slaves, and Brown together with six of his men were convicted and hung.

The manner of Brown's death served to greatly intensify the feeling between the North and South, and caused him to be considered as a martyr by many.

The failure of the South to make Kansas a slave state intensified the feeling in that section. It was apparent that the South could not maintain her equality representation with the North unless the existing condition of things could be changed. Resolutions having this end in view were proposed and passed in the Senate, but the House refused to concur.

At the National Democratic convention to nominate a candidate for President, held at Charleston, South Carolina, April 23, 1860, an anti-slavery plank was adopted by a small majority, and the Alabama delegation bolted the convention, followed by most of the Southern States.

The convention adjourned to meet at Baltimore, where, on July 18th, Douglass was nominated for President.

The seceders met at Richmond and thence adjourned to Baltimore, where they nominated John C. Breckinridge for President.

On May 19th, a third faction, calling itself the "Constitutional Union Party," nominated John Bell, of Tennessee, for President, and Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, as Vice President. The Republican convention, held in Chicago, nominated Abraham Lincoln for President and Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, as Vice President.

Mr. Hamlin was against the extension of slavery rather than its abolition. In a speech in the United States Senate, June 12, 1856, he thus referred to the Democratic convention then recently

held in Cincinnati. "The convention has actually incorporated into the platform of the Democratic party that doctrine which, only a few years ago, met with nothing but ridicule and contempt here and elsewhere, namely, that the flag of the Federal Union, under the constitution of the United States, carries slavery wherever it floats. If this baleful principle be true, then that national ode, which inspires us always as on a battle field, should be re-written by Drake, and should read:

"Forever float that standard sheet,  
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,  
With slavery's soil beneath our feet,  
And slavery's banner streaming o'er us."

The campaign that ensued was a memorable one. Douglass canvassed the entire country, his finished and impetuous oratory stirring the people profoundly.

Jeff. Davis and other Democratic speakers canvassed the North. Mr. Lincoln made numerous speeches, maintaining the right of each State to control its domestic affairs according to their own judgment, and condemning the attempt to enforce the extreme pretensions of a purely local interest (meaning the slave interest) through the intervention of Congress and the courts, by the democratic administration. He denied the new doctrine that the constitution of its own force carried slavery into the territories; and denied the authority of Congress or of any Territorial Legislature to give leave of existence to slavery in any territory of the United States."

In the South, the question was also discussed as to what course should be pursued in case Lincoln was elected. South Carolina had been ready to secede from the Union for ten years, and in 1860, the Alabama Legislature was instructed by Governor Moore to call a convention in case, as he put it, a "Black Republican" was elected President in November.

Great excitement prevailed in the South upon the announcement of Lincoln's election. South Carolina took immediate steps to call a constitutional convention and on December 26, 1860, passed an ordinance of secession, and at the same time invited

other States to meet its representatives in convention at Montgomery, Alabama.

Throughout the South there was some difference of opinion. One faction favoring immediate secession without waiting for the action of any other State; another faction advocated co-operation, and a third faction was opposed to secession altogether.

The South was terribly in earnest, while there was a strong feeling of compromise in the North. Mr. Lincoln, while conceding nothing in reference to the policy of secession, stated in a letter to Alexander H. Stephens that he had no intention to interfere with slavery where it already existed.

President Buchanan, in his last message to Congress, depreciated the alarming condition of the country. He denied the right of any State to secede, but claimed that he could find no authority in the constitution to "coerce into submission a State which is attempting to withdraw from the Union."

Committees of both the House and Senate were appointed to confer with representatives of the Southern States, and if possible agree upon some plan of compromise. The committee of the House declared that, "any reasonable, proper and constitutional guarantee of their political rights should be promptly given."

The committee, however, were obliged to report back that they were unable to come to any agreement upon any general plan of compromise.

While President Buchanan hesitated, the South made preparations for war. Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, made formal request of President Buchanan that Fort Sumter be turned over to the State, which request was refused.

On December 31, 1860, the flag of the United States was hauled down from the Federal Arsenal at Charleston and the flag of South Carolina hoisted in its place. Forts Pickens and Moultrie had already been seized.

It was at this time that Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote Brother Jonathan's Lament." Addressed to South Carolina.

"She has gone—she has left us in passion and pride,  
Our stormy browed sister so long at our side,  
She has torn her own star from our firmament's glow  
And turned on her brother the face of a foe."



The secession of South Carolina was soon followed by other Southern States, and at a convention held in Montgomery, Ala., a constitution was prepared and submitted to the people of the seceding states and adopted.

In the meantime the State of Louisiana had seized Forts Jackson and St. Phillips below New Orleans.

President Buchanan allowed the Federal arsenal public buildings and public property in the South to fall into the hands of the seceders.

On the 4th of March, 1861, a new man took the helm of the ship of state, against which was beating the waves of civil war.

In his inaugural address, President Lincoln said, "I declare that I have no intention, directly or indirectly, to interfere with slavery where it now exists. The Union of these States is perpetual. The power conveyed to me will be used to hold, occupy and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the duties and imports."

In closing he said:

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, rests the momentous issue of civil war. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory stretching from every patriotic home and grave and friends, will yet swell the chords of the Union when touched as they shall be touched by the better angels of our natures."

Commissioners were sent to President Lincoln from the Confederate States, seeking recognition. They were told that they could not be received except as private citizens of the Republic. Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, under instructions from the President of the Confederacy, demanded the surrender of Fort Sumter. Major Anderson, the commander, refused, and on April 10, 1861, the bombardment of the Fort commenced. The flag was shot down and Major Anderson was compelled to surrender.

The die was cast—the war was on.

Then it was that,

“The deathless spirit of Democracy  
 Confronting all emergencies, arose  
 To teach the lesson of the century,  
 Illumined by the bravery of those  
 Who still were brothers, though unyielding foes,  
 On both sides, courage holding death in scorn;  
 On both sides honor that to battle goes,  
 Not seeking gain, nor all to glory sworn,  
 But fighting for a flag in proud defiance borne.”

“Mine eyes have seen,” the Northern soldier sang,  
 “The glory of the coming of the Lord,”  
 “My Maryland,” from Gulf to Richmond rang,  
 And wakened Southern hearts with every word.  
 Men left the plowshare and unsheathed the sword;  
 Converging armies covered hill and plain;  
 Long gathered gold was lavishly outpoured,  
 And proud and patriotic souls were fain  
 To think that chivalry had sprung to life again!

“Lincoln arose, the masterful great man,  
 Girt with rude grandeur, quailing doubt and fear,  
 A more than King, yet in whose veins there ran  
 The red blood of the people, warm, sincere.  
 Blending of Puritan and Cavalier.  
 A will whose force stern warriors came to ask,  
 A heart that melted at a mother’s tear,  
 These brought he to his superhuman task;  
 Over a tragic soul he wore a comic mask.

“He was the South’s child more than the North;  
 His soul was not compact of rock and snow,  
 But such as old Kentucky’s soil brings forth,  
 The splendid race of giants that we know,  
 Firm unto friends and generous unto foe.  
 Such birthrights all environments forestall.  
 Resistlessly their tide of impulse flow.  
 These men answering to his country’s call,  
 Was full of human faults and nobler for them all.”

“He is a life and not a legend yet;  
 For thousands live who shook him by the hand,  
 Millions, whose sympathies with his were set,  
 Whose hopes and griefs alike with his were grand,

Who deeply mourned his passing, they command  
Our homage to the greatest man they saw—  
They his familiars, and throughout our land  
The years confirm them, every race and land,  
Even of rancor now the voice is hushed in awe!  
"The blessings of a new enfranchised race,  
A nation's tribute to its counselor,  
The love of all his kind, unite to grace  
His fame, who stood in Freedom's darkest hour,  
Raised by the hand of God to wield a power  
Benignant, wise and gentle, yet to be  
The ruling spirit of a mighty war,  
Bathed in its blood, and after victory  
Crowned with a martyr's crown to all humanity."

When clamoring for war, how little did the people, both North and South, realize the magnitude and consequences of the struggle they were entering upon.

In a message to Congress, President Lincoln said:

"Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray that this scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled up by the bondman for centuries of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be repaid by another drawn by the sword, it must be said, the judgments of God are true and righteous altogether."

The emancipation of the slaves was not contemplated by President Lincoln at the beginning of the war. The preservation of the Union was his only purpose. The emancipation proclamation was not issued until September 1862, and then only as a war measure, to take effect on January 1, 1863, in case the seceding States did not lay down their arms and renew their allegiance to the Union.

President Lincoln often declared that he would save the Union with slavery if he could, but without it if necessary.

The total number of Union troops enlisted during the war, as reported by the War Department, was 2,772,448. By reduction a three years basis the number was 1,556,678. The number serving in the Confederate army was 1,234,000. The losses in the Union army, killed and wounded, were 385,245. It is estimated that 94,000 were killed on the Confederate side. The total number of colored troops enlisted was 186,097.

## PERSONAL SKETCHES OF OFFICERS.

BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL EMBURY D. OSBAND.

Brigadier-General Embury D. Osband was born in Ontario county, State of New York, June 6, 1832. When he was a child, his family removed to Macedon, Wayne county, where his youth and young manhood was spent in an atmosphere favorable to the best mental development. Here he received an excellent academic education in what was then one of the best educational institutions in Western New York.

The son of a clergyman, he inherited a fondness for books, but relinquishing his desire for college training for want of means, he turned bravely, when a mere lad, to take a man's part in life's actions. He had acquired nothing so valuable as a belief that "nothing is impossible to him who wills."

At fifteen, he was a successful teacher in the common schools. at eighteen, principal of a "graded school," with assistant teachers. At nineteen, he began business life as an agent for school books, in which business he continued for five years following, most of the time as General Western Agent for the publishing house of D. Appleton & Co. Few young men have developed greater business ability. With vigorous health, a perennial hopefulness, an indomitable will that could not brook defeat, he combined an intuitive knowledge of human nature and a ready tact in dealing with men, which was invaluable. In the course of these years, he traveled over the Middle West, acquiring wide acquaintance with educational and business men, and making many lasting friendships. The year 1857, found him established in the book business in Chicago, then a city of less than one hundred thousand inhabitants.

Later he embarked in an extensive news business, with news rooms in three localities in the city. Many will recall his headquarters on Dearborn street under the Tremont House, then a noted land mark.

In the years immediately preceding the war, much attention was paid to military tactics for which he had a strong liking.

The Ellsworth Zouaves were exciting much interest by their striking uniforms and marvelous perfection in drill.



E. D. OSBAND,  
Col. & Brig. Gen. Third U. S. C. C.



A superb horseman, he was most naturally inclined to cavalry, and joined Barker's Dragoons, of which organization he was made First Lieutenant. April, 1861 came. The country was awakened to find the national sky black with the tempest of war. The first gun at Sumter thundered in every city and hamlet in the land. It fell upon the ears of the people like a knell.

There was consternation everywhere, everywhere blanched faces and quivering lips as men talked of the nation's calamity.

And then came the call "To Arms," echoing from sea to sea. What a response was that? When, from city and prairie, from mountain and valley, men gathered in companies and battalions for the defense of the nation's liberties.

Nowhere did the tide of patriotism rise higher than in Chicago. Business interests, friends, homes were forgotten in one great absorbing passion to strike down those whose parricidal hands had been raised against the nation's life. On Sunday night following the fall of Sumter, amid the din from a hundred brazen throats on river and harbor, which sounded like the trumpet of doom, the first company of infantry, the Zouaves, left for the front.

It was Chicago's first gift to the nation.

On Monday evening following, amid the darkness and rain, emblematic of the gloom and mist of tears that pervaded many homes, which in giving had given their all, the first company of cavalry, Barker's Dragoons, followed, and with them, Lieutenant Osband.

A young man of twenty-eight, he brought to the service of his country a splendid physique with wonderful powers of endurance, an unquenchable energy, a superb power of command, a genius for military operations, a brave and loyal heart.

Nor was this all. His unformulated creed, "Nothing is impossible to him who wills," included in his provisions, not only or chiefly, but every one with whom he was associated. This absolute belief in the unlimited possibilities of success before every one in whom he was interested gave him strength and courage as a commander, and the consciousness of his faith in them inspired those under him with like faith in themselves and with his own fine enthusiasm. It was a characteristic jest, and more than a jest, when, years afterwards, in command

of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, he wrote: "They are a superb body of men, I am very proud of them. I almost believe sometimes they could whip the whole Southern Confederacy."

As First Lieutenant in Barker's Dragoons, enlisted for three months, serving as General McClellan's escort, Lieutenant Osband came into notice as a brilliant and promising cavalry officer.

Returning to Chicago at the expiration of the company's term of enlistment, he raised a company (A) for the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, of which he was made Captain. Many of the men who served under him in Barker's Dragoons, reenlisted in his company.

On joining the army at Cairo in the winter of 1861, Captain Osband, with his company, was detached from the regiment and assigned to duty as General Grant's escort, serving in that capacity until after the surrender of Vicksburg, when, at the instigation of General Grant, he was authorized to raise a regiment of colored cavalry, the Third U. S. of which he was commissioned Colonel.

In this work his genius as an organizer was brought into action, and, from the roughest material, he moulded one of the best disciplined and most effective cavalry regiments in the entire army.

His ability as a disciplinarian and organizer attracted the attention of the District commanders, and he was given the command of the cavalry forces of the District, which, from a depleted and disorganized mass, he brought to a state of great proficiency.

With this cavalry force he made some of the most successful and sweeping raids of the war.

He was made a brigadier-general by brevet, October 5, 1864. On June 24, 1865, the war being virtually over, he resigned his commission and returned to the pursuits of civil life, engaging in planting cotton on an extensive scale, in Mississippi, where on the 4th of October, 1866, he died of a malignant fever.

The following letter from General Canby, and comments of the press show in what estimation General Osband was held.



HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF WEST MISSISSIPPI

*New Orleans, La., February 18, 1865.*

*Major-General N. J. T. Dana,*

*Commanding Department of Mississippi,*

*Memphis, Tenn.*

*General:* I am instructed by the Major-General Commanding to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of Colonel E. D. Osband's report of his recent expedition, transmitted by you on the 12th instant, and to inform you that it has been forwarded to the headquarters of the Army, with the following endorsement."

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Headquarters Military Division of West Mississippi,

*New Orleans, La., February 18, 1865.*

This expedition was ordered sometime since for the purpose of destroying or breaking up the regiments of McNeil and Harrison, and the smaller bands in the Washita Country, who have been engaged in raiding the plantations on the West bank of the Mississippi between the mouths of the Arkansas and Red Rivers. The command was unable, in consequence of the terrible condition of the roads, to reach its ultimate destination, but appears to have done its work very thoroughly, as far as it was able to go.

The officers and men of this command are entitled to commendation, and I recommend that Colonel Osband, for his services in this and in other previous operations (already reported) east of the river, be brevetted a Brigadier-General."

E. R. S. CANBY,

*Major-General Commanding.*

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

C. T. CHRISTENSEN,

*Licut., Col. and Asst. Adjutant-General.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI,

*Memphis, Tenn., February 25, 1865.*

"Official copy respectfully furnished Col. E. D. Osband.

F. W. Fox,

*Capt. & Asst. Adjutant-General.*

*(From a Rochester, New York paper.)*

"Among recent promotions made by the President and confirmed by the Senate, we notice the name of Col. E. D. Osband Third U. S. Cavalry, Colored, promoted to Brigadier-General. This promotion will be gratifying to a large number of personal friends in this city and Wayne county. Colonel Osband has been with General Grierson in his raids in the southwest, and his promotion is a deserved testimonial to his gallant and dashing qualities as a cavalry leader."

*(From the Vicksburg Herald.)*

"General Osband—This gallant cavalry officer was in our city yesterday looking as if there was material in him for many a campaign in the future.

He is one of the most distinguished cavalry officers in the service and has made some famous raids through Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana during the last few months."

*(From the Cairo Times.)*

*June 26, 1865.*

"We were made glad today by a grip from the honest and warworn palm of our old friend General Osband, who called upon us in one of his happiest moods. General Ed, entered the service at the first breaking out of the rebellion as First Lieu-

tenant under Chas. Barker of the Chicago Dragoons, who came to Cairo in company with the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Illinois Infantry together with Capt. Jim Smith's Chicago Battery, "A."

Lieutenant Osband next entered the famous old Fourth Illinois Cavalry as Captain of Company "A," and was detailed as General Grant's body guard.

In July, 1863, he was promoted to the Majorship of the regiment, and in October he was commissioned Colonel of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry lost at Greenwood, Yazoo City, Jackson, Fayette and Woodville, 325 men and 18 officers in killed and wounded.

In March, 1864, the regiment was brigaded with the Third Brigade U. S. Cavalry.

In October, 1864, Osband was brevetted Brigadier in command of the brigade, and in December, was ordered to Memphis and relieved General Grierson.

In May, last, the command chased General Hood's command into Tunica Bend, where was captured all the rebel commander's baggage. the army only escaping by the skin of its teeth.

The General has quit the walks of war, has resigned and become a peaceful citizen, is going to "squat" in the country he helped to conquer.

We wish for him the fullest success. We know that if he is as successful as a planter as he has been as an officer in the service, he will raise a thousand bales the first year."

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*(From a Chicago paper.)*

"Brigadier-General E. D. Osband is now on a brief visit to this city, where he left many friends on entering the service, who will rejoice at his successful and highly honorable military career. He joined the first cavalry organization tendered the Government from Chicago, and at the expiration of the first term of service, raised a company of his own.

Always active, dashing and clear headed, promotion was sure. He has filled the Colonelcy of one of the finest colored cavalry regiments in the service, from which he rose to com-

mand the Third Brigade of the Cavalry Division of the army of the Tennessee.

General Osband has been honorably and prominently connected with some of the most dashing achievements of the cavalry army in the southwest. He has always struck strong blows for the Union and straight home.

Holding him in such regard we can but regret that he has tendered his resignation."

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*(From the Vicksburg Herald.)*

"Brigadier-General E. D. Osband—We have heard with regret of this gallant officer's resignation. It is the interest of the country to keep such valuable soldiers in the army, to pay them well and give them rank.

General Osband's distinguished services as a cavalry leader in Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee, during a long series of months have not won for him the full reputation to which their brilliancy entitled him. When the whole history of affairs in the valley comes to be written, he will figure in it as the most dashing, tireless, able and successful cavalry commander that we have had in this section, and unexcelled anywhere. His great ability and purity in administration have always been unquestioned. We wish success to him as to every old soldier, and have spoken specially of him because he is one of the heroes who has made his mark in this State, and has done himself honor wherever he has served.

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*(From the Chicago Republican.)*

*October 15, 1866.*

General E. D. Osband—Another one of those gallant and true men to whose valor and skill the country was indebted for its triumphs in the late war has passed away. We have received intelligence of the death of General Osband, of brain fever, after an illness of three weeks, at his plantation in Mississippi, on the 4th instant.

In a letter from one who was near him we have the following account:

"About two weeks before his illness the cholera broke out among the negroes on his plantation, and raged with great violence.

Out of the forty-four hands employed, thirty-eight had the disease, and thirteen died. The General was unremitting in his attention to his people, and many of them owe their lives to his watchfulness and kindly care.

This labor and want of rest, together with the mental anxiety from the demoralization of his working force, in the midst of the cotton picking season, induced the disease."

"Ned Osband" was well known in Chicago. He resided here ten years previous to the war. Many personal friends here will lament him, but few can have learned the fine qualities of manhood which he revealed to those who were intimately associated with him through arduous, responsible, and dangerous service. He was about thirty-four years of age at the time of his death, and had given four years of his prime to the country's service.

As a cavalry leader he developed with experience a facility and power in raiding operations, and in general management of large bodies of cavalry, which earned him greater distinction than he obtained, for the reason that public attention was directed to the grander fields. In 1861, he entered the service as Lieutenant in Barker's Dragoons, which served under McClellan in West Virginia.

He soon after raised and became captain of Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

He was conspicuous in the Army of the Tennessee as Chief of General Grant's escort; a position which he retained during all the campaigns from Belmont to the fall of Vicksburg. General Grant's attachment to him was manifested on more than one occasion, and especially when, having been assigned to a higher command in the Eastern department, he offered Osband a desirable position near him. Osband remained behind, however, to recruit and organize the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, of which he became Colonel.

He was joined in this undertaking by a number of his com-

rades of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, particularly those of his own Company, which had been on duty as escort.

The Cavalry regiment which he organized became, under him, and with the excellent officers which he had selected, one of the most efficient bodies of men in the army, and was more than once complimented in general orders for its gallantry in action. Under the orders of Major-General Dana, his genius for organization and discipline was brought to bear in the autumn of 1864, upon an inert mass of several regiments of cavalry lying at Vicksburg, of which, from the sickness incident to badly located camps, from insufficient equipment, and from mismanagement, hardly three hundred men were fit for duty. He earned the commendation of his superior officers by speedily improving the condition and morale of these troops, and the result was that he was placed in active command of them as a brigade.

It soon realized the solierly ideal of cavalry, in its rapid movements, daring onsets, and thorough subordination in all circumstances.

General Osband's career as commander in independent operations here began.

The records of his raids and flights, while acting under the orders of General Canby and the commanders of Mississippi and West Tennessee, will be a brilliant chapter in the history yet to be written of campaigns in the latter days of the rebellion. Radiating from Vicksburg, Memphis and Natchez, from September, 1864, to April, 1865, he from time to time swept the interior for hundreds of miles, with forces of cavalry varying from one thousand to five thousand men, engaging the enemy many times, and suffering no defeats or disasters.

Hood's movement westward and northward, and the movement of a considerable portion of Kirby Smith's troops toward the river during that winter, was the occasion of giving ample employment to our cavalry. Its duty was to keep the river clear of rebel batteries, to destroy railroads in the interior, to destroy depots of supplies to clear out guerrilla bands and spies, and to engage such rebel forces as might be found. The figure of Osband engaged in this service must linger in the memory of many a soldier as the impersonation of energy, vigilance and activity.

With the habitual air of a man used to the necessity of prompt and inflexible decision, and keen apprehension and fertility of expedients in eye and speech, with a power of endurance whose limit seemed never to be reached, with readiness to command, and with the consciousness of the esteem of his commanding officer and the devotion of his men, "Ned" Osband moved and seemed to be, as he really was, every inch a General. Of the results of his almost incessant active service during that eventful year, it is unnecessary to speak further than that they were abundant in prisoners, trophies, and valuable captures.

He left the service soon after the final surrender. In the fall he engaged in planting in the Yazoo Country, gathering around him a number of his former officers and men.

Without detracting from the distinction achieved by other cavalymen whom the country has honored, it may be justly said that General Osband possessed, in an extraordinary degree, those qualities which contribute to success in the most difficult branch of the military service, and which would have ultimately won him a renown second to that of few others.

Whatever blemishes may have marred the symmetry of his character, his generous and true heart made amends for; and his lively wit and winning speech gave lustre even to his faults.

The memory of his companionship, glowing temperament, and officer-like qualities will long be cherished by many brave men who served with and under him, and who will lament his untimely decease as if it was that of a brother.

Mrs. Osband, an estimable and accomplished lady, has been with him at the South during the last two years, and closed his eyes in death.

He has left, at least, the inheritance of a nobly distinguished name and an unstained reputation."

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*(From a Detroit paper.)*

DEATH OF BRIGADIER-GENERAL E. D. OSBAND.

News of the death of this brave officer has just been received by his uncle, E. C. Walker of this city. He died on his plantation

near Skipwith's Landing, Miss., on the 4th instant, of inflammation of the brain.

General Osband was well known in this city and Chicago. He left Chicago at the very outbreak of the war, as First Lieutenant in Barker's Dragoons, and served the three months of his enlistment in West Virginia under McClellen.

He then became captain in the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, and for two years and a half commanded General Grant's body guard, shared in all his battles and sieges, and was in personal contact with that distinguished general.

He organized and led some of the most successful and daring raids of the southwest. He was a bold-dashing officer in whose wisdom and judgment both those above and under him had entire confidence.

Another brave man is added to the long list of the departed heroes of the rebellion."

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*(From a Chicago paper.)*

#### DEATH OF GENERAL E. D. OSBAND.

The friends of Gen. E. D. Osband this morning received intelligence of his death at his plantation in Mississippi, on the 4th instant.

General Osband had many friends in the Western Army and in this city, where he had been a resident for some ten years before the breaking out of the rebellion. He was a man of generous and good heart, possessing many manly qualities of character, and was highly esteemed by all who knew him.

As a citizen, he was honorable and public spirited, and as a soldier and an officer was brave, skilled, daring and ardently patriotic.

He died in the prime of his manhood, being only thirty-four years of age."

---

*(From the Hillside Standard, Hillside, Michigan.)*

"We are under the painful necessity of recording the death of one more of the gallant men to whose skill and bravery the country is indebted for its preservation. Intelligence has been



received of the death of General E. D. Osband. General Osband was widely known. For ten years prior to the war he was a resident of Chicago, where his personal acquaintance was large.

Many friends lament him in common with those who served with and under him, for his many endearing qualities as a soldier and as a gentleman.

He organized the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry of which he became Colonel, selecting his subordinates from his old command, First Battalion, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, losing in its first year's service over 200 men and 12 commissioned officers killed and wounded, seven of the officers being killed. Among its captures were a whole battery of rebel artillery, including men, guns, caissons and harness complete after a brilliant sabre charge, in October, 1864, at Woodville, Miss. They earned a high reputation by their rapid movements and uniform success, particularly in the raid on the Mississippi Central Railroad, in the winter of 1864, which resulted in the destruction of the Black River Bridge, fifty miles of railroad, large depots of supplies and rolling stock, in the very face of a largely superior body of the enemy, thereby effectually preventing reenforcements being sent from the lower Mississippi country to General Hood, who was then sorely pressed by General Thomas.

The records of General Osband's raids under the orders of the commanders of the departments of Tennessee and Mississippi will show that to his efforts and those of the brave men who served under him, we are largely indebted for the keeping open the Mississippi River and the preventing of re-enforcements and supplies being crossed from the idle, well-fed armies under Kirby Smith and Dick Taylor to their beaten, discouraged, though desperate legions in the East.

General Osband was personally brave, tireless in energy, patriotic to a degree bordering on enthusiasm, with a capability to endure fatigue rarely excelled, warm in his friendships, devoted to the welfare of his men.

We of Hillside county are personally interested in doing honor to the memory of the late General.

He was a son-in-law of our esteemed fellow citizen, E. Walter Esq., of this State, who with his family thus suffers a second bereavement, one son, Lieut. Eugene Walter, having been with Lieut. Archibald Stewart, also of this State, killed in action."

## CHAPTER II.

## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REGIMENT.

In September, 1863, Adjutant-General Lorenze Thomas visited Vicksburg to set in motion the work of organizing colored troops.

At the suggestion of General Grant, one regiment of colored cavalry was authorized to be raised and equipped at Vicksburg, to be designated as the First Mississippi Cavalry, African Descent. This designation was, however, subsequently changed to "Third U. S. Colored Cavalry."

General Grant took much interest in the organization of this regiment, recommending for its colonel, Major E. D. Osband, the commander of the General's escort, Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry. This was a deserved tribute to a worthy and gallant officer.

As commander of the "Old Guard," General Grant's escort, Major Osband had been under the immediate notice of General Grant from the commencement of the war, and that the general made no mistake in his estimate of the commander of his escort, that officer's subsequent career as colonel and brigadier-general commanding cavalry division, was fully demonstrated.

The field and staff, and many of the line officers of this regiment were taken from the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, coming largely from the First Battalion of that regiment, companies A, B, C, and D.

As an evidence of General Grant's high estimate of the men composing his escort company, the following extract from his official report is taken from the Rebellion Records.

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HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE,

*Vicksburg, July 6, 1863.*

"In all former reports I have failed to make mention of Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry Volunteers, Captain E. D. Osband commanding.

This company has been on duty with me as an escort com-

pany since November, 1861, and in every engagement I have been in since that time, rendering valuable service, attracting general attention for their exemplary conduct, soldierly bearing, and promptness. It would not be overstating the merits of this company to say that many of them would fill with credit any position in a cavalry regiment."

Provision was made for six white officers in each company in this regiment, three commissioned and three non-commissioned, the latter being the ranking sergeants, viz.:

First Sergeant, Quartermaster Sergeant, and Commissary Sergeant.

The non-commissioned staff were all white men.

These sergeants were selected from the non-commissioned officers of veteran regiments, coming highly recommended.

On receiving their commissions, the officers were detailed on recruiting service. They applied themselves to this work with a zeal that brought forth the best results.

The regiment was mustered into the service of the United States by companies at Vicksburg, Skipwith's Landing and Haynes Bluff, Miss., from October 9, 1863 to March 1, 1864. During the time of recruiting and organizing the regiment, Colonel Osband retained command of the First Battalion Fourth Illinois Cavalry, which, with the recruits of the new regiment, formed an independent command, and was stationed at various exposed points in the vicinity of Vicksburg, and were constantly engaged in picket and scouting duty.

Within six months of its inception the regiment was fully organized and complete in every particular, and stood on an equal footing with the veteran cavalry of the department. During that period the regiment had taken an active part in many important expeditions, had participated in numerous engagements, and suffered a loss of many killed and wounded.

Up to this time the regiment had received no horses from the government, having only such mounts, horses and mules, as they captured from the enemy, or took from the corrals of condemned stock.

(It is worthy of note that this regiment was enlisted, organized and drilled in the field.) Always on the picket lines, never exempt from attack, and always within range of the enemies guns, frequently leaving the drill ground to repel an attack.

It was only by utilizing every spare moment that time was found for instruction. Yet rapid progress was made, in fact the celerity with which the men acquired a knowledge of their duties as soldiers was truly remarkable, and they soon reached a standard of excellence that attracted general attention.

That the regiment did attain a high state of proficiency in drill and deportment is shown by the following inspection report.

This inspection was made during the brief time the regiment formed a part of the garrison at Memphis, Tennessee.

Nine hundred and fifty enlisted men were lined up for this inspection, which took place on a large open space of several hundred acres, and lasted from 9 a. m. until 4. p. m. Memphis turned out en masse to witness the drill.

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*(Inspection Report.)*

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE,  
INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Knoxville, August 20, 1865.*

"Attention is respectfully invited to the following extract from the letter of advise of Captain S. M. Budlong, Inspector District of West Tennessee, accompanying Monthly Inspection Report for month of July, 1865.

THIRD U. S. COLORED CAVALRY.

"The superior condition I find this regiment in, should entitle it to a place in active service. They are superior to any regiment I have lately inspected in regard to drill. Manual of arms, perfect, dismounted drill executed with precision, mounted drill also superior, executed with promptness and without fault, dressing rapidly.

Major Main executed all of the evolutions of the regiment in my presence, and I could not detect any fault excepting perhaps Company "D," evidently the officer's fault, Lieutenant Lar-





J. B. COOK,  
Lieut.-Colonel Third U. S. C. C.

rabee, in not giving his command promptly, creating some difficulty in alignment and re-formation."

S. M. BUDLONG,

*Captain and Inspector District of West Tennessee.*

(Official,)

FRANK G. TULLISS,

*Captain and Assistant Inspector-General,*

*Department of Tennessee.*

(Endorsement. )

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HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE,

*Inspector General's Office,*

*Knoxville, August 21, 1865.*

Respectfully referred to Major Main, Third Regiment U. S. Colored Cavalry, for his information.

By command of Major-General Stoneman,

FRANK G. TULLISS,

*Captain and Assistant Inspector-General,*

*Department of Tennessee.*

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LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JEREMIAH B. COOK,

The subject of this sketch was born June 22, 1834, in Lancaster County, State of Pennsylvania, of Quaker parentage. Starting out when only fifteen years of age to make his own way in the world, he engaged in canal boating, and later in flat boating on the lower Mississippi, touching at Memphis, Vicksburg, Natchez and New Orleans. Abandoning flat boating, he returned home in 1852.

In 1853, he went to California, going by the Nicaragua route, where he remained during the following three years. Leaving California in 1856, he returned to Pennsylvania by the way of Panama. In April, 1867, he located in Kansas City, Missouri. Leaving Kansas City in March, 1860, he settled in Delevan,

Tazewell County, Illinois, on a quarter section of land, and engaged in farming.

He enlisted, September, 20th, as a private in company H, Fourth Illinois Cavalry. Going to the front with this regiment, he took an active part in the battles of Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, Shiloh and all the subsequent battles and campaigns that regiment was engaged in up to October 1863, being successively promoted to the rank of corporal, sergeant and Second Lieutenant.

At the assault of Fort Henry, February 6, 1862, being sent in advance with a detachment of twelve men, he drove in the enemies cavalry pickets, dashing into the outer works and, with his own hands, pulled down a confederate flag, which was waving over the works. This was the first rebel flag captured by the army of the Tennessee. This flag is still in the possession of Col. Cook.

In recognition of his gallantry in action he was, August 1, 1863, promoted to the rank of second lieutenant, and assigned to Company F, which company he thereafter commanded during his service in that regiment, the captain being in poor health, and the First Lieutenant on detached service.

On the 28th of December, 1863, having the advance of General Winslow's brigade with only fourteen men, he charged Company B, of the Third Texas Cavalry, 30 strong, capturing 8 of them and 20 stand of arms.

He was commissioned a Major in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, October 15, 1863, and assisted in the organization of that regiment, but did not take rank until a full organization was effected, March 1, 1864.

He was promoted to the Lieutenant-Colonelcy of the regiment, November 27, 1864, for gallantry in action, as shown by the following order ::

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WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE.

*Washington*, December 22, 1864.

General Orders,  
No. 303.

The following General Orders, No. 81, from the headquar-



ters, Military Division of West Mississippi, is approved by the President of the United States:

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HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIV. OF WEST MISSISSIPPI.

*New Orleans, La.,* December 9, 1864.

General Orders,  
No. 81.

Subject to the approval of the President of the United States, Major J. B. Cook, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, is hereby promoted to the Lieutenant Colonelcy of that regiment, to date from the 27th of November, 1864, in consideration of gallantry displayed by him on that day, when, with his men dismounted and having nothing but railroad ties for a path, he charged over Big Black River Bridge, near Canton, Miss. in the face of a heavy fire, driving off the rebel force stationed on the opposite shore behind a strong stockade, and destroyed the bridge, by which the main line of the rebel General Hood's communication with his troops in South Mississippi and Alabama were effectually cut off. The Major General commanding the District of West Tennessee and Vicksburg styles this affair as one of the most daring and heroic acts of the war.

By order of Major-General E. R. S. Canby.

C. T. CHRISTENSON,

*Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant General.*

By order of Secretary of War.

E. D. TOWNSEND,

*Assistant Adjutant-General*

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(*R. R. Vol. XLV, Part 1, p. 778.*)

Lieutenant-Colonel Cook's career in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was marked throughout by a series of brilliant achievements. Colonel Osband having command of the cavalry brigade, the command of the regiment devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel Cook a great part of the time, and to whose dash and daring many of its brilliant victories are due. Brave and daring to recklessness, of splendid physique, standing six feet two in

height, with powers of endurance seemingly limitless, he rode through the storms of battle unscratched, impervious alike to hardships and dangers.

His early experiences and contact with the rough side of life admirably fitted him for the rougher school of the soldier.

Always vigilant and aggressive, the first to attack, he gave an enemy no time to prepare for action. Stopping not to count the numbers of his adversary, he impetuously led his men to the charge, sweeping aside all opposition.

Possessing the confidence of his superiors and the admiration of his men, the most hazardous duty was undertaken with assurance of success.

Under more favorable circumstances, the way being open to a broader field, he would have achieved greater distinction.

The subject of this sketch furnishes a striking example of the volunteer soldier of the civil war, who, jumping to arms at his country's call, moved by patriotism alone, entered the ranks to fight her battles, and without friends or influence, by sheer force of merit, won a place among the heroes of the war, and who, when the strife was ended, divesting themselves of war's habiliments, returned to the pursuits of civil life, taking up the work where they laid it down, and with the same energy that characterized their conduct during the war, set to work to repair the havoc wrought by four years of bloody strife, still winning, in civil life, high encomiums from their fellow citizens.

At the close of the war, immediately after the regiment was mustered out of the service, January 26, 1866, Colonel Cook engaged in planting cotton in Arkansas, planting one thousand acres, but disposing of his crop before it reached maturity, he returned to his farm in Illinois, devoting himself to its improvement. He was appointed, in 1868, to a government position in the revenue service, serving two years with credit.

In 1870, he was nominated for representative in the state legislature, by the republicans of Tazewell County, but failed of election, the entire county ticket being defeated. Disposing of his farm, he moved to Kansas in 1871, settling on a half section of unimproved land in Labette County, near Chetopa, which he brought to a high state of cultivation.

In 1873, he removed to Chetopa and engaged in the real estate





WILLIAM T. BEADLES,  
Major and Surgeon Third U. S. C. C.

and loan business, in which he was associated with J. M. Cavaness, editor and proprietor of the *Chetopa Advance*, in connection with which they established the *Settlers' Guide*, a paper devoted to the interests of immigration, through the agency of which, hundreds of worthy settlers sought homes on the fertile lands of Kansas, adding to its population, wealth and prosperity.

He was one of the incorporators of the Neosho Valley Improvement Company, also one of the projectors of the Denver, Memphis and Atlanta Railroad, being president of the first named company.

In 1881, he was elected Mayor of Chetopa, re-elected, and served three consecutive terms. He represented his home county in the Kansas Legislature in the sessions 1885-6. He introduced and secured the passage of a number of important measures, among them the following:

A bill to establish a Soldiers Orphan Home. A bill to maintain destitute Union soldiers in their homes, by county aid. A bill providing, at county expense, for the burial of destitute Union soldiers, and to erect suitable headstones to mark their graves.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE BLACK TROOPERS IN BATTLE.

On the 9th of October 1863, the first company (A) was mustered into the service, with the following named officers: W. W. Webber, Captain, formerly Second Lieutenant, Company C, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Frank W. Calais, First Lieutenant, formerly bugler Company D, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, James S. Matthews, Second Lieutenant, formerly Corporal Company C, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

Soon after this company was mustered into the service it joined the First Battalion, Fourth Illinois Cavalry in an expedition in the rear of Vicksburg.

This expedition covered a wide scope of country east of the Yazoo river.

This raiding force consisted of a hundred and thirty men and

officers of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, and forty enlisted men of Company A, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, the latter commanded by Captain Webber and Lieutenant Matthews, all under the command of Colonel Osband.

The object of this raid was to gather up stock, beef cattle, horses and mules for the use of the army in Vicksburg, and incidently secure recruits for the new regiment.

Ordinarily so small a force would not have been sent into the enemy's country, swarming as it was with rebel cavalry, but a large Union force of infantry and artillery having left Vicksburg a day or two previous, going in the direction of Jackson and Meridian, the time was thought to be favorable for such a move, as it was believed that the rebel cavalry would be kept busy by the force above mentioned. But subsequent events proved how deceptive appearances are sometimes. Cavalry move rapidly, especially under great provocation, the provocation in this instance being an earnest appeal from the citizens of that vicinity to be saved from the ravages of a Yankee foraging party, which brought a force of five hundred rebel cavalry to the rescue.

Leaving Vicksburg, the command moved in a northeasterly direction, keeping well back in the hill country. The plan was to make a wide circuit, and return by the valley road, which ran along the Yazoo River.

At the expiration of two days, the command had gathered up a large number of beef cattle, horses and mules, which as the number increased, greatly hindered and embarrassed the movements of the command, and, of course greatly exasperated the people from whom the stock was taken, and no wonder they appealed to the rebel general for relief.

Moving at daylight on the morning of the third day, the command headed westward toward Satartia. Captain Charles H. Chapin, commanding Company D, Fourth Illinois cavalry, was sent to visit a neighboring plantation, with orders to join the command at a point where the ridge road intersected the valley road. Up to this time no indications of the enemy had been seen.

The command moved leisurely along in order to give Captain Chapin time to make the circuit of the plantation he was to visit.

When near the village of Satartia, the advance guard under

Lieutenant Dickey, Fourth Illinois, were furiously attacked by a large force of rebel cavalry.

Though Lieutenant Dickey and his men met the charge of the enemy with great gallantry, they were forced back onto the head of the main column.

The rebels had taken a well chosen position where, under cover of a deep ravine and the wooded hills that flanked the road, they had every advantage in their favor. When the firing commenced, Lieutenant Main, Fourth Illinois Cavalry Commanding Company A, of that regiment was in the rear of the column, but flanking the road, he brought his company on the gallop to the front, when, with his own and companies B, and C, of the Fourth Illinois, and company A, of the Third U. S. he led them in a charge that threw the enemy into great confusion, dislodging them from their position and drawing them into the open, thus completely turning the tables as regarded position.

In this charge, Captain Webber and Lieutenant Matthews led their company into the thickest of the fray, where they fought hand to hand, using revolvers and sabres, and when Captain Webber fell, wounded, his men seemed frenzied, and with a yell swept everything before them.

Immediately on meeting the enemy, Colonel Osband dispatched a swift courier to bring Captain Chapin to the scene, but that officer hearing the firing and divining its cause, headed his company for the scene of action, putting his horses to their best speed, arriving on the ground with a yell that further disconcerted the enemy, they believing that large re-inforcements had arrived.

The command, when attacked was marching toward the valley road, which ran along the east bank of the Yazoo river. Sartatia is situated a little back from the river, among the hills, the intervening country being open, level ground. It was now the object of the command to cross this open ground and reach the shelter of the heavy timber along the river.

The enemy, after their first repulse, fell back and took up a position on an adjacent hill, where they still command to some extent, the approach to the valley road. Though they were pretty badly shaken up, and had suffered considerable loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners falling into our hands, they still showed a disposition to further contest the right of way.

Acting with his characteristic promptness and foresight, Colonel Osband, after a hurried consultation with Captain Chapin and Lieutenant Main, suggested a line of action by which Lieutenant Main was to take one hundred men of the Fourth Illinois cavalry and make a demonstration against the enemy, while Captain Chapin, with the rest of the command, should conduct the wagons and captured stock across the open ground to the shelter of the woods along the river. Our men being partially under cover of a scrubby growth of trees and bushes growing along the creek, the enemy were unable to correctly estimate our numbers, and probably thought we had a much larger force than we really had.

One of the prisoners remarked, "By the way youens fit, weans throug youens had a thousand men." Lieutenant Main, carrying out his orders, moved his men under cover of a deep ravine, dismounted, taking a position between the enemy and the valley road, where at long range, he opened a galling fire on them without exposing his men. The inferior arms of the rebels failed to reach the Union line, and Lieutenant Main, slowly advancing his line, the enemy were forced still further back. From this position a galling fire was kept up on the enemy while the movement across the open ground was successfully accomplished. In the meantime, however, the rebels, seeing the turn things were taking redoubled their efforts to break through Lieutenant Main's line, but the troopers of the Fourth Illinois were veterans of many hard fought battles, and stood their ground, pouring in a fire from their long-range carbines that the rebels could not face.

As the long column under Captain Chapin disappeared in the woods along the Yazoo, Lieutenant Main abandoned his position and, mounting his men, retreated across the open ground, closely followed by the enemy, who, as they approached the timber, received the compliments of Captain Chapin's men, who had taken position in the edge of the timber, thus covering the retreat of Lieutenant Main and his men, one of whom, however, poorly mounted, his horse lagging behind, only escaped the uplifted sabre of a rebel soldier by a shot from the woods, which stretched his horse upon the ground.

At this point Lieutenant Main took the rear with companies



A and B, Fourth Illinois, and the command moved down the valley road toward Vicksburg.

After entering the woods the enemy became bolder and more aggressive, but a few lessons in bushwhacking and nicely arranged ambuscades soon caused them to be more cautious. However, they kept up a spirited pursuit until dark.

An incident occurred during this retreat which came well nigh bringing on another general engagement. One of our wagons broke down, and as it contained our rations, the load had to be transferred to another wagon, which caused some delay. The enemy were pressing us hard, and Colonel Osband sent back word, asking if the enemy could be held until the load could be shifted from the broken wagon. Of course we could only do our best. We were in the open, having just left the timber, which was immediately occupied by the advance guard of the enemy, we could not stand out there in the open and be shot down. A bold dash must be made. Soldiers will fight for their rations, so we charged back, regaining possession of the timber before the main body of the enemy came up, where we made a successful stand, holding the enemy at bay temporarily, but our position became well nigh untenable by the time the column was in condition to move on again.

In this charge, two men of company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, were shot off their horses, fortunately, however, they were not dangerously hurt, but they had to be put in the wagon.

When night fell, the enemy ceased the pursuit, and later on the command bivouacked for the night, a heavy rain following. The command took shelter behind some old breast works about fifteen miles from Vicksburg.

The men were completely worn out, having been in the saddle since four o'clock that morning. That night the men slept on their arms, an attack being expected, but the night passed quietly though sleeplessly in a drenching rain.

Through the trying scenes of that day, fighting from ten a.m. till dark, the black troopers acquitted themselves with great credit winning the confidence and good will of the white soldiers. Indeed there was no wavering in the ranks of the colored soldiers. Captain Webber and Lieutenant Matthews held them under the most galling fire as steadily as veteran troops. Quite a number

of them were wounded, some seriously, but they made light of it.

An amusing incident occurred during the fight at Satartia; in the first charge the rebels became scattered through the brush-grown ravine, and during a lull in the fighting, a Fourth Illinois cavalryman was sent out on the flank to watch the movements of the enemy. This trooper, in urging his horse through the brush and high weeds, indulged in numerous expletives such as, "Get out of here you d—, I'll fill you full of lead," when to his great amazement, a rebel soldier, hiding in the brush and supposing these remarks were intended for him, rose up exclaiming, "Don't shoot, I'll surrender," whereupon our trooper was so completely dazed that he threw down his gun and implored the rebel not to shoot, declaring himself a willing prisoner. How this affair might have terminated had these two valiant foes been left to themselves, can only be surmised, as their embarrassing position was relieved by the timely appearance of a third party, another Fourth Illinois cavalryman, who, appreciating the situation, made them both prisoners.

This incident furnishes additional proof of the fact that a really brave soldier may, under certain circumstances, lose his presence of mind and become "rattled."

This victory was won over great odds, one hundred and seventy five against five hundred, and the advantage of position with the stronger party.

The writer owes his life and everlasting gratitude to Sergeant Wing, Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, subsequently Captain Company C, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, who struck down a rebel officer as his sabre was descending on the writer's head.

It was during the first charge, when the fighting was fast and furious.

The two bodies of cavalry came together with a crash that shook the earth, men and horses going down in a promiscuous scramble.

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MAJOR CHARLES H. CHAPIN.

Major Chapin was born September 27, 1833, in Onedia County, State of New York.

He enlisted, April 19, 1861, in Barker's Chicago Dragoons for three months, the company serving as General McClellan's escort during his West Virginia Campaign.

This company being the only cavalry force in that command did all the scouting and picket duty. At the battle of Rich Mountain, the company took an active part, leading the advance of the army. The subject of this sketch was frequently engaged as an independent scout, winning praise for his daring and useful services in that capacity. Returning to Chicago at the expiration of his term of enlistment, he re-enlisted in company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, then being organized at Ottawa, Illinois by Colonel T. Lyle Dickey.

A born leader of men, brave, self reliant and aggressive, promotion came fast.

These qualities being recognized he was, from the start, made a Sergeant in his company, and subsequently Sergeant-major of the regiment, Second Lieutenant October 5, 1861, and assigned to company H, First Lieutenant March 1, 1862, Captain August, 1863, and assigned to company D, Major Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, October 15, 1863.

Following the fortunes of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry through the brilliant campaigns of this regiment, which crowned the Union army with the splendid victories of Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Vicksburg, his record is closely interwoven with the history of that famous regiment on whose banners are inscribed a long list of brilliant victories, in all of which he played a conspicuous part. Brave, cool-headed and tireless in the performance of every duty, Major Chapin won the love and admiration of his men and the confidence and high esteem of his superiors. If a bold leader was wanted for some arduous and dangerous duty, requiring dash, nerve and tact, he was invariably singled out for the task. Riding foremost in the thickest of the fight, he inspired his men with a courage and confidence that met and overcame all obstacles.

In the broader field— as Major in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanding a battalion and frequently the regiment he came to the front as one of the most dashing cavalry officers in the Western army.

As commander of the First Battalion, stationed at Goodrich's Landing, Louisiana, in the spring and summer of 1864, acting

independently, his dash and genius as a successful cavalry leader was recognized by General Canby, who trusted him with the duty of freeing that section of the irregular bands of Confederate cavalry who were interrupting navigation on the Mississippi River.

It was with such officers as Major Chapin that the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was able to win victories and win a name second to no regiment in the Western Army. With officers less brave, resourceful and patriotic these victories could not have been won.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

The Regiment goes into winter quarters at Skipwith's Landing. In obedience to the following order, the regiment proceeded to Skipwith's Landing, Mississippi.

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTEENTH ARMY CORPS,

*Vicksburg, Miss.* November 9, 1863,

MAJOR E. D. OSBAND,

*Commanding Battalion Fourth Illinois Cavalry.*

*Major*—You will proceed to-morrow morning with your command, including the colored men whom you have enlisted, to Haynes Bluff by land, where a steamboat will be in readiness to ferry you across the Yazoo river.

From that point you will make a scout up through the country west of the Yazoo and through the Deer Creek country, to break up and destroy any bands of the enemy you may hear of, and finally cross to Skipwith's Landing, where you will establish your camp and recruit your colored regiment.

During the expedition you will, of course, gather up what colored men you can, who are fit for service, to fill up your regiment.

You will refrain as far as possible from molesting or interfering with citizens who are well disposed toward the U. S. government, and who are remaining quietly at their homes. Especially in the vicinity of Skipwith's Landing are many loyal people who are not to be disturbed and whose families and property you will protect.



S. V. W. WHITING,  
1st Lieut. and Quartermaster Third U. S. C. C.



The steamboat *Chenango* will be at Haynes Bluff shortly after your arrival to ferry you across the river.

You will leave your quartermaster and a detail of men to load your stores, camp and garrison equipage, and transportation on board steamboat here to be sent to Skipwith's Landing.

You will make the required returns and reports to these headquarters, and keep me advised of everything important which may come to your knowledge.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAS. B. McPIERSON,  
*Major-General.*

As directed, Colonel Osband proceeded with his command to Skipwith's Landing. The march covering several days, was through the enemy's country, but was made without serious opposition. Small bands of rebel cavalry were encountered here and there, who were easily brushed aside.

The command reached its destination on the 13th. Skipwith's Landing is situated on the east bank of the Mississippi river, about one hundred miles above Vicksburg, Mississippi, which place, then as now, is tributary to one of the richest cotton producing sections of the South, known as the Yazoo delta.

Cotton plantations of vast extent abounded in this section, one of the largest being that of General Wade Hampton.

Thousands of slaves were formerly owned and kept on these plantations, which, with their large gin-houses, outbuildings and negro quarters, all whitewashed, presented a picturesque appearance.

Skipwith's Landing was simply a landing place for steamboats plying their trade on the Mississippi river. Here they discharged their freight—plantation supplies—and took on cotton for the New Orleans market.

A camp ground was selected close to the landing place, just over the levee, where, on a grassy plat, tents were pitched. Here the command remained until the following spring, doing scouting duty. The camp was kept in a state of constant alarm by reason of threatened attacks by the enemy. In the frequent scouts into the interior the command frequently met the enemy in considerable force.

(*Report of Colonel E. D. Osband, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Commanding Post.*)

HEADQUARTERS POST,

*Skipwith's Landing, Miss.*

November 15, 1863,

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to report that my command, consisting of the First Battalion, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, and three companies of the First Mississippi Cavalry (African Descent) 300 strong, in pursuance of instructions from the Major-General commanding, left Vicksburg at 11 a. m. the 10th instant, arriving at and crossing the Yazoo river at Anthony's Ferry in the afternoon, camping for the night at the ferry, on the north side of the river. Marched at daylight on the 11th, crossing Deer Creek at Black Fork, and moving up on the east side of it to within seven miles of Rolling Fork, and camped for the night on Clark's plantation, a march of 37 miles.

Learning that Barksdale's (Mississippi) Cavalry and the Seventh Texas Cavalry, about 700 strong, had been at Rolling Fork four days previously and had disabled the bridges across that stream and Deer Creek, at daylight on the 12th, I re-crossed Deer creek, and arrived at the Mississippi river near Tallulah Court House, and camped at the landing opposite Lake Providence.

Marched at 6 a. m., 13th instant, and arrived at this place at 12m.

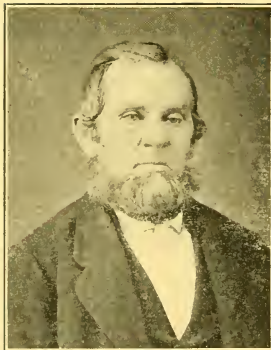
I met no enemy and obtained no recruits, the route of march being through a deserted and abandoned country, and am now satisfied, from information which I regard as reliable, that the two regiments of confederate cavalry came from Yazoo City to intercept my march here. Failing to find us, they returned in the same direction with what conscripts, horses, mules, hogs and negroes they could obtain.

About fifty men of the same class remained across Deer Creek, engaged in the same business.

I leave to-morrow morning with 170 men of my command, accompanied by Lieutenant Lee, Thirty-second Ohio Volunteers,







PHILIP WOLFERSBERGER.

1st Lieut. and Commissary Third U. S. C. C.

and shall proceed beyond the Sunflower, if practicable, to assist Lieutenant Lee and to recruit.

I am, Colonel, very respectfully your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel Commanding.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL, W. T. CLARK,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

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MAJOR COOK ORDERED TO ROEBUCK LAKE AND HONEY ISLAND.

At an early hour on the morning of November 19, 1863, Major Cook left camp with a force of 150 men and officers, made up of detachments from companies A., B. and C., of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, with orders to proceed to Roebuck Lake and thence to Honey Island on the Yazoo river, a distance of a hundred miles or more.

Aside from the opportunity afforded to secure recruits and the moral effect it might have, the object of this raid does not appear.

The impracticability of reaching Honey Island should have been known before the start was made. Even had the command succeeded in effecting a crossing of Deer creek, Bayou Philiar and other streams, there was no possible means of reaching Honey Island lying out in the Yazoo river.

On leaving camp, Major Cook proceeded up the Mississippi river about fifteen miles, following the levee, when he made a short halt to feed his horses at a large plantation, posting a picket of a corporal and three men at a point where they had a view of the road for some distance without being seen themselves, a curve in the levee hiding them from view. This picket had been posted but a short time when they saw a horseman approaching from the north, coming down the levee toward them; as he came within hailing distance, the picket covered him with their guns and commanded him to dismount. Thus caught, the man had to choose between unconditional surrender and being shot; wisely he chose the former. He was taken to Major Cook, and proved to be a Confederate officer, Captain Johnson, of the 28th Arkansas infantry. He was sent back to camp under guard of the men who captured him.

Moving on up the river, the command camped that night on the Worthington plantation, about thirty miles from Skipwith's Landing.

This plantation was situated in one of the richest cotton growing sections of the south, and was typical of the old regime when cotton was King. It embraced many acres of rich cotton land, extending as far as the eye could reach, to till which required a large number of slaves, who in ante bellum days, contributed so much to the material development and prosperity of the South.

At the time of which we write, the blighting effects of the war was everywhere visible, the fields no longer bloomed with the fleecy staple, nor resounded with the happy songs of the plantation darkies. No rich harvest was in prospect, weeds and brambles grew where once the cotton bloomed, verily its grandure had departed—gone out in the blaze of secession. Its glory had vanished with the first blast of war that beat upon it. Built on a foundation of sand, its corner stone human slavery, it toppled over at the first blast proclaiming emancipation.

The slaves heard the thunder of the Union guns, speaking in the voice of freedom, and they deserted the plantations and flocked to the Union camps, leaving the plow in the furrow and, in many instances, taking the mules with them.

There was something pathetic in the contemplation of the rise and fall of this reeked and abandoned plantation.

A few old, decrepit darkies, relics of by-gone days, sit crooning in their cabin doors, waiting for the promised day of jubilee, while the pickaninnies gamboled on the green, neglected and depreciated property.

The white male portion of the place were conspicuous by their absence, presumably away fighting the battles of the confederacy.

The ladies of the old manor house held themselves rigidly aloof, and seemed disinclined to allow the colored people to communicate with the soldiers, and withal, there seemed to be an air of mystery pervading the whole atmosphere around this plantation, and the officers were not long in discovering that they were unwelcome visitors.

No amount of fine diplomacy could elicit a grain of information regarding the country, the people, roads, &c., to all inquiries the reply was "don't know." The polite and kindly proffer of a guard being placed around their house if they felt in the least insecure, they scornfully rejected.

They also seemed to look upon the command as the victim of some avenging nemesis. Though treated with marked kindness and consideration, they remained silent and uncommunicative. This grave-like silence had a depressing influence on the command, hushing the song and laughter that usually enlivens the camp and bivouac. As a cause of the gloomy silence, some of the officers suggested that perhaps some one lay dead in the house. Soldiers are quick to "catch on," their training and experience sharpens their faculties and makes them distrustful and self-reliant in times of danger. Like the barometer indicating the coming storm, so with the experienced soldier, who by intuition feels the subtle influence warning him to be on his guard. On this occasion all felt that some secret plotting was going on that boded ill to the command, but none voiced their thoughts.

Was there a lurking foe within striking distance? Was there meaning in the furtive glances exchanged between the inmates of the house? Were they watching for an opportunity to send a message to some one? These and kindred questions are what a mind-reader would have discovered in the thoughts of the officers. Yet not a word was spoken. But as the shades of night settled down over the scene, and a chain guard of trusty sentinels were placed around the plantation houses, with strict orders to permit no one to approach or leave the premises under any circumstances, and every approach to the camp closely guarded, then all felt relieved. Those in authority had read the signs, which to an experienced cavalry officer was as plain as an open book.

Arms and ammunition were carefully looked to, pickets doubled and the troops disposed of for the night in a manner best suited to meet an attack. No "Taps" was sounded—no bugle blast broke the evening quiet to guide an enemy to the camping place. Quietly the soldiers lay down to sleep, their arms within ready reach, and the officers keeping one ear to the ground.

Happily, however, the night passed quietly, due in all probability to the precautions taken, it being subsequently ascertained that a force of rebel cavalry were in the immediate vicinity; and had the people on the plantation been allowed an opportunity to send a message to them an attack would most certainly have been made that night.

The command was in the saddle at an early hour on the following morning and ready for any emergency. Continuing up the river, Greenville was reached about noon, where a short halt was made during a drenching rain storm.

The town was as silent as a graveyard; in fact seemed almost deserted, the only signs of life visible being here and there a scared face peering through half closed blinds. No information regarding the whereabouts of the enemy could be gained from any one.

Leaving Greenville, the column turned east, reaching Deer Creek about 4 p. m., at a point fifteen miles inland from the Mississippi river, where the command camped for the night.

#### A CLOSE CALL FOR A REBEL MAJOR-GENERAL.

Soon after going into camp on the night last mentioned, a negro boy informed Major Cook that "massa captain done got lum frum de army, 'spec he be mighty skeered if he know de Yankees dat clus." A few questions put to the boy, made it plain that the said captain was a person of some importance, and the place being but a few miles further up Deer Creek, Captain Webber was ordered to take a detachment of his company and proceed to the place designated and capture and bring in the rebel officer, taking the boy with him as a guide.

Captain Webber arrived at the place some time after dark and quietly surrounded the house and applied for admittance. He was graciously received and on making known the object of his unseasonable call, was informed that the General was not at home, he having taken his departure a short time before.

Quite a number of gentlemen were present, they having called, they said, to bid the general bon voyage. Further investigation, however, developed the fact that, in the first flurry of excitement incident to the appearance of the Union troopers, the General jumped through a window and favored by the dense shrubbery growing around the house, made his way to the stable, where mounting one of the visitor's horses ready saddled, he made his escape.

Instead of a captain, as the boy had stated, the officer proved to be Major-General French, of the Confederate army.

General French was, it seemed, taking the benefit of a short leave of absence—spending a few days with his family at his

plantation home on Deer Creek, which being remote from the active scenes of war, was deemed quite safe.

Fifteen fine horses were taken from the general's plantation, some of them the property of his visitors—the gentlemen who had called to pay their respects to the distinguished general. These animals were retained for the use of the regiment.

The command resumed the march on the following morning, following the east bank of Deer Creek for some distance, and failing to effect a crossing, the creek being bank full, Major Cook found it impossible to carry out his instructions, and therefore abandoned the attempt to reach Roebuck Lake and Honey Island, and the command turned west toward Skipwith's Landing, where it arrived late that night.

The result of this raid was, one prisoner captured, twenty recruits secured and forty head of horses and mules captured.

The following is Colonel Osband's report :

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HEADQUARTERS POST.

*Skipwith's Landing, Miss., November 23, 1863.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM T. CLARK.

*Assistant Adjutant-General, Seventeenth Army Corps.*

Colonel:—I have the honor to report that the expedition to Roebuck Lake returned yesterday without accomplishing the object; the bad state of the roads together with the distance deterred the officer in command from going to the extent of his instructions.

It was found that no enemy was in this country this side of the Yazoo River.

Another scout returning the 21st, brings sixty cattle, so that we can subsist some time so far as beef is concerned.

I have given the gun-boats some of the captured beef, they have no means of supply.

I find almost all the people eminently loyal and do not upon any scout or march take any property from them. There are however, in this country some bitter confederates; among the list is Parson Harris, who married Miss Helen Johnson.

Harris was expelled from Nashville and came here and married Miss Johnson.

He now resides at Canton, Miss.

I have taken the cattle from his place and purpose to take the sweet-potatoes or such of them as are not needed by the negroes for their support, and the furniture in the house formerly used as General Furguson's headquarters.

Should I not take it, the negroes will destroy it. Shall I send the furniture to Vicksburg or Memphis?

Somethng like a week must elapse before I can move, as my horses are very tired. I purpose then, after destroying the ferries, moving up the Yazoo and Clear Creek to Roebuck Lake, thence back to Deer Creek, Rolling Fork, and home.

I have expelled the cotton buyers from my lines as they had no authority from any one to purchase cotton.

Can a man ship cotton to Memphis, going with it himself, without a permit from the Treasury Department?

I am Colonel, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Col. First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D.*

Commanding Post.

CAPTAIN ANDREW EMERY

Was born in Hancock County, State of Maine, January 5, 1833.

Going west at the age of 22, he settled in Lockport, Illinois, in 1855.

He enlisted under the first call for troops, April, 1861, for three months, in a company of Lockport Light Artillery. At the expiration of his three months' term of service he re-enlisted in Company D, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, in which regiment he took an active part in the battles of Fort Donelson and Shiloh and in all the subsequent battles, skirmishes and campaigns of that regiment up to the time of the fall of Vicksburg, winning the golden opinions of his superior officers, notably at the battles of Fort Donelson and Shiloh, being promoted to the rank of First duty Sergeant for meritorious conduct.





CAPT. ANDREW EMERY,  
Third U. S. C. C.



In a skirmish in 1862, he, being cut off from his company, charged through the enemy's lines midst a shower of bullets, the rebels shouting "shoot that Yank," for which he received the sobriquet of "Yank," and which has clung to him to this day. He was discharged from the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, October 15, 1863, for promotion as captain of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, in which regiment he served with marked distinction until the close of the war, being mustered out with the regiment, January 26, 1866.

The familiar figure of Captain "Yank," as he was called by his brother officers, leading his troopers on scout and in battle will always linger in the memory of the survivors of the regiment.

On a closely contested field, conspicuous by his height, six feet, he was a tower of strength, inspiring confidence by the example of his matchless daring and unconquerable determination.

With such officers the regiment was able to win victories.

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## CHAPTER V.

### A RAID ACROSS THE RIVER IN LOUISIANA AND ARKANSAS.

*The Bocuf River Fight, December 13, 1863.*

The command had been inactive for some time, and the dull routine of camp duty had become irksome to both officers and men, when dame rumor spread the report that a scout across the river was in contemplation.

A little inquiry developed the fact that Colonel Osband had received orders from Vicksburg to make a demonstration on the west side of the Mississippi River and to press into service the first steamer sighted, to be used in transferring the command to the west side of the river.

There was no need to set a watch, all were on the lookout for a boat; they had not long to wait, however, for the next day, December 10, 1863, a large steamer was sighted coming up the river. The boat was signaled to land, but not heeding the signal, the request was emphasized by a shot from a six pounder, sent hurtling across her bows which brought her to the bank.

The steamer was immediately taken possession of by an officer acting under orders from Colonel Osband, and the embarkation of the troops commenced at once, and by 2 p. m. that day the command was landed on the west bank of the river, in Louisiana, about twenty miles below the Arkansas state line.

The troops comprising this expedition were as follows;

One hundred and twenty five men exclusive of officers, detailed from companies A, B, and C, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, under command of Major J. B. Cook, and seventy-five enlisted men of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, under command of First Lieutenant Ed. M. Main, making a total force of two hundred enlisted men, the whole under command of Major Chas. H. Chapin. Included in this force were a number of officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commissioned but not assigned, who accompanied the expedition as recruiting officers.

On disembarking on the west side of the river, the command marched inland about eight miles and camped for the night.

The march was resumed at an early hour on the following morning, moving in a westerly direction, crossing Bayou Macon, and continuing still westerly to Boeuf River, thence north along the east side of the last named stream, passing through a French settlement. The march up to this time was without incident worthy of note, but from this point on, well mounted scouts appeared in our front, who were hotly pursued, but being mounted on swift horses, they evaded capture. Several suspicious characters were, however, run down and captured, some of them proving to be rebel soldiers. The command continued its march along the east side of Boeuf River until the Arkansas state line was reached, where it camped on the night of the 12th being then in Chicot County, Arkansas. The command camped this night on the plantation of Mr. Merriweather. This plantation was situated on a slight ridge running along the edge of a dense, boggy swamp lying between the plantation and Boeuf River, perhaps half a mile in extent at this point.

The road ran along the edge of the swamp. The plantation buildings, standing a little back, faced the road, and were inclosed by a rail fence.

These buildings were all built of logs, the main residence having two large rooms, a hall and front porch. The smoke-house stood a little to the rear of the main dwelling, and a little further back and to the right were several negro cabins. The gin-house stood about two hundred yards north of the other buildings.

It being late in the evening and quite dark when the command camped, but a very limited knowledge of the place and its surrounding could be gained. The usual precautions, however, were taken to guard the camp, pickets being posted on all the known roads, also a camp guard posted.

The troops were disposed of for the night as follows:

The Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment was camped at the gin-house, and the colored soldiers in and about the negro cabins. Majors Chapin and Cook, and Lieutenant Main occupied one of the large rooms in the main dwelling, where the prisoners, fifteen in all, were also kept, a guard being placed over them.

Nothing occurred during the night<sup>d</sup> to disturb the camp. Early the next morning, some time before daylight, the men were awakened, horses fed and saddled and coffee made, that and hardtack being the breakfast.

The morning was dark, cold and chilly, and the soldiers were sipping their coffee around the camp-fires, which were burning brightly, when, without a moments warning, the stillness was broken by the blinding flash and report of five hundred shot-guns followed by the rebel yell, which we had all learned to know so well.

The officers, veterans of many hard fought battles, realized at once what it meant—a fight to the death. The quick, sharp commands of the officers, “Fall in,” rang out above the din of the tumult. Some one shouted, “Kick out the fires,” which was promptly done. Majors Chapin and Cook, pistols in hand, rushed out of the house midst a storm of bullets and, by their example and utter disregard of danger, encouraged the men to stand their ground.

In a trice the black troopers were facing the enemy, returning shot for shot and yell for yell. The officers of the black troopers had their men under complete control, absolute obedience

was a part of their training, and the officers were able to handle them with consummate effectiveness.

The enemy had every advantage, were vastly superior in numbers, better armed for close quarters, having double barreled shot-guns, chose their own position and mode of attack, and had a complete knowledge of the country.

It was therefore only the cool daring and skill of the Union officers, the fine discipline and complete control they had over their men that enabled them to beat back their assailants and snatch victory from what seemed certain destruction to the black troopers.

Captain Emery, commanding Company B, was the first to get his company into position, forming it in front of the house, where the force of the attack seemed to be directed. A rail fence separated the house from the road, and it was along this fence, on the inside, that the companies took position.

Company A, led by Lieutenant Frank Calais, formed on Captain Emery's left, with Company C, led by Lieutenant Richard Taylor, on the left of Company A, all facing the road and inside the enclosure.

The companies took position in much less time than it takes to tell it, and in the face of a withering fire from the enemy, who, in the darkness, could only be seen by the flash of their guns as they advanced to the attack.

Many of the horses having been tied to the fence, were directly in the line of fire, consequently quite a number of them were killed and wounded, and those wounded, breaking loose, plunged around among the men, threatening to do about as much damage as the enemy, when, by order of Major Chapin, they were shot down, the men using them as breast works.

The enemy pressed forward and were only checked on reaching the fence. The rebel officers could be heard above the din and clash of arms, shouting, "Charge the fence," but there was a wall of fire along that fence that they could not breast. One big fellow did, however, mount the fence only to fall over on the inside among our men, shot through the breast.

An incident occurred in this connection that will serve to illustrate the desperate character of the fighting and the utter disregard of danger displayed by all engaged in it.

One of the colored soldiers firing through the fence became aware that some one on the other side was pulling at his gun while he was reloading it; the gun was a breech-loading carbine, and quickly loaded. Discharging it, the fellow on the other side of the fence got, not the gun, but its contents full in the breast.

In speaking of the affair afterward, the black soldier said, "Dat was all right, de neb done koch ole de wrong end uv de gun."

This colored soldier, Henry Wilson by name, was a member of Company B. He went North after the war, acquired an education, studied law, and is now a member of the Chicago bar.

For a time it seemed that the black troopers and their white officers must be overwhelmed by sheer force of numbers. They were fighting against fearful odds—five to one, and their ranks were growing fearfully thinner ever minute, forty or more having already been put out of the fight, killed and wounded, but knowing what fate awaited them if defeated, they fought on, determined rather to die fighting with arms in their hands.

At this critical period Lieutenant Calais moved his company to the left, crossed the road into the woods, and fell on the enemies' flank with such dash and spirit, firing and yelling, that the enemy broke in disorder, at which the other companies charged across the road in pursuit, literally setting the woods ablaze with the flash of their carbines and the vehemence of their yells.

The old maxim that "It's darkest just before day," was never more happily illustrated than in this instance.

The darkest period in the history of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was on the morning of that eventful 13th of December, 1863.

Had they suffered defeat on that occasion the morale of the regiment would have been destroyed and its subsequent history not worth writing.

And the darkest moment of that desperate struggle was just before the eastern horizon flashed her welcome light over the scene, revealing the enemy in disordered retreat.

In the stirring scenes just narrated we have lost sight for a moment of the brave Fourth Illinois Calvarymen. Alas, they were put out of the fight almost in the first round, that is, many

of them were, but later on they struck the enemy a crushing blow. As previously stated, the Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment was camped at the gin-house, some 200 yards from where the colored soldiers camped. It was this detachment that received the first shock of the attack, giving the black troopers a few seconds' warning, otherwise the history of this affair would perhaps, record different results.

There was no better cavalry than the Fourth Illinois in the whole Union army. They were veterans of two years' campaigning, and had been tested on many hard fought fields. They led the advance of General Grant's army from Cairo to Fort Donelson, from Fort Donelson to Shiloh, from Shiloh to Corinth, from Corinth to Memphis, and from Memphis to Vicksburg. They had fought and won victories over the South's best cavalry. They had crossed sabres with the cavalymen of Forrest, of Chalmers, of Wirt Adams, and of Cholson. Their ranks had been thinned by death on the firing line until the remnant of the heroic souls left seemed to bear a charmed life. But in the Boeuf River affair, assailed by a stealthy foe creeping upon them in the dark, they were taken at a great disadvantage and shot down before they could make resistance. Standing in the full glare of their camp fires, secure in the confidence that their comrades on the picket post, ever watchful, would give timely warning of the approach of an enemy, they presented a good mark for an ambushed foe, and were utterly at the mercy of the attacking party, who spared them not.

This detachment suffered severely, quite a number being wounded, and thirteen taken prisoners.

As the enemy retreated back into the woods from whence they came, it being sufficiently light to distinguish objects, Lieutenant Main, rallying his detachment of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, mounted them and started in pursuit with a view of heading the enemy off. Galloping up the road about a mile, where finding a road leading through the woods toward the river, he followed it until it brought him out at the ferry, where alas! the enemy had effected a crossing, being in the act of landing on the other side of the river. They were within easy carbine range, but our men dare not fire on them, as the prisoners—thirteen of their comrades, were kept in the foreground as a



shield to the enemy, but the brave fellows waved adieus and gave a cheer for the Fourth Cavalry and the flag. These men were taken to Shreveport, La., where they were confined in the rebel prison for some time, and from which some of them were paroled and others made their escape, all finally making their way back to Vicksburg on foot, swimming rivers and undergoing many hardships and privations.

Thus was fought and won the first severe engagement the regiment took part in, and, too, under the most adverse circumstances.

The success achieved in this engagement gave the black troopers a confidence in themselves that made them almost invincible. In this as in all subsequent engagements they faced the alternative of victory or death.

In this engagement every officer and man did his full duty. Where all displayed the qualities of a hero there is no room for individual mention. The victory in itself proves the spirit and courage of the command, and in it is glory and praise far above empty words to express.

The casualties in this engagement were five commissioned officers wounded, viz.: Capt. Jesse Brainard, Lieutenant Richard Taylor, Marshall Moon, Oscar Randall, and Leland Hall, all of them seriously. Seven enlisted men killed, 28 enlisted men wounded, and 13 enlisted men taken prisoners, the latter being all members of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment.

Total loss in killed, wounded and prisoners 53, or one-fourth of the entire command. Lieutenants Moon and Randall never fully recovered from the effects of their wounds, and subsequently resigned their commissions and returned to their homes in Illinois, where they died.

Having no surgeon with the command, and none being procurable in that neighborhood, it was highly necessary to move the wounded men back to camp with as little delay as possible, therefore Mr. Merriweather's ox team and wagon was pressed into service for this purpose. Two large feather beds were taken from Mr. Merriweather's house and placed in the wagon, on which Lieutenants Moon and Randall were made as comfortable as possible, they being the most seriously wounded.

The other wounded officers and men were able, with some assistance, to ride their horses, though suffering intensely.

While these preparations were going on, the dead were buried, except those of the enemy, who were left where they fell, to be cared for by their friends.

Everything being in readiness, the command left the scene of its late sanguinary conflict. The owner of the plantation, Mr. Merriweather, was a typical Arkansas "Moss Back." He was the only white person on the place, living there alone with his niggers. That he was of the ultra pro-slavery class and a rabid secessionist goes without saying. Whether he had any previous knowledge of the attack, or abetted in it, we had no knowledge at that time, but in after years the truth came out that he found means of apprising the rebel commander of our presence on his plantation. As the command marched away from the scene of the fight, Mr. Merriweather was left standing on the porch of his house, looking the picture of distress. His houses were nearly demolished, riddled with bullets, fences torn down and the yard strewn with dead men and horses.

Truly here was General Sherman's definition of war, "War is Hell."

From a peaceful, quiet country home, this place was transformed in a twinkling into a scene of blood and carnage.

After proceeding about ten miles, Lieutenant Moon suffered so much from the jolt of the wagon, that he begged to be left at some farm-house, saying that he had rather take his chances in the enemy's country among strangers than suffer such torture. It was therefore with regret and many misgivings that finally he was left at a wayside house, the people seeming kindly disposed and promising to take good care of him. They were promised adequate reward if, on the officer being sent for, it was found that they had been faithful to the trust.

It was also intimated that retribution would be swift and sure should harm come to the wounded officer through any lack of care on their part.

One of the colored servants was left with Lieutenant Moon to take care of him, and to insure their safety, four citizens were taken and held as hostages. Lieutenant Moon was as brave a soldier as ever drew a sabre, and was highly esteemed and loved by all who knew him. He was formerly a Sergeant in Company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry. This was the second time

he had been left, wounded, in the enemies' country, having been shot in the breast both times, first in the right, and this time in the left breast. In this instance he was well cared for, the people with whom he was left, did everything in their power for his comfort and protection, even procuring a doctor to dress his wounds. He recovered sufficiently in a few days to be removed, when an escort was sent to bring him into camp.

On reaching Bayou Mason, some difficulty was encountered in effecting a crossing, and it was found necessary to take some of the wounded men across in pirogue, or dug-outs, as the ford presented too many dangers to safely trust the wounded men in the ox wagon or on their horses. The crossing was, however, effected without mishap.

On account of the wounded men, the command camped early in the evening, a few miles from the west bank of the Mississippi river.

On the morning of the 14th, the command resumed the march. Colonel Osband having been notified by courier, met the command on the west side of the river, bringing surgeons and rations. Here the troops were embarked on a steamer, and were soon back in their camp at Skipwith's Landing.

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COLONEL OSBAND'S REPORT.

The following is Colonel Osband's official report of the fight at Boeuf River, Arkansas, December 13, 1863.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE POST.

*Skipwith's Landing, Miss., December 14, 1863.*

*Colonel*—I have the honor to report that on the 10th instant, I sent seventy-five men of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry and 125 men of the First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D. under the command of Major Chapin, First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D. across the Mississippi river to make a scout toward Lake Village and endeavor to capture some forty rebel cavalry who were hanging negroes and driving off stock.

The scout proceeded to Merriweather's Ferry on Boeuf

river, and camped half a mile from the ferry, the First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D. at the house and the Fourth Illinois Cavalry at the cotton-gin, 150 yards distant, both house and gin being surrounded with swampy land covered with water.

Although no force was known to be in the vicinity, each road was picketed with ten men, and also a camp guard of ten men.

At 3 a. m. the picket was ordered to mount by Major Chapin and camp called. At 5 a. m. in the midst of most intense darkness (the men having breakfasted, saddled, and only waiting for daylight to march) the rebels, 140 strong, under Captain Adams, of Caper's battalion, on foot having during the night stolen into our lines between picket stations in the swamp and formed all about the cotton-gin, gave the Fourth Illinois Cavalry volley after volley, stampeding the horses and causing great confusion among the men, who rapidly retreated upon the house, where the First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D. were stationed. The rebels then charged the house, but could not dislodge the colored soldiers.

The contest here for a long time was fiercely fought, and ended in the entire discomfiture of the rebels.

Intense darkness prevented pursuit, and when daylight came it was found the rebels, after regaining their horses, had dispersed through the woods, each man running on his own account. Ten dead of the enemy were found, and numbers were seen helped upon horses, and thus carried away.

The enemy having dispersed, no pursuit could be made, and the number of wounded necessitated the return to camp, which was reached at 10 a. m. to-day.

Two men too severely hurt to travel were left a few miles from here with surgeon until sufficiently recovered to permit their removal.

Horses and mules were captured, enough to cover our loss of stock, although the quality is not as good as our own.

Too much credit cannot be given the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, who did all that men could do under the circumstances. Surprised, they fought hand to hand, and those who were taken prisoners were bodily carried away.

The conduct of the First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D. could





CAPT. RICHARD TAYLOR,  
Third U. S. C. C.

not have been excelled by veterans, wounded men refusing to go to the rear.

It was the first fight for most of them, but, in the language of Major Cook, their commanding officer, "I could have held them till the last man was shot."

I inclose a rough sketch of the country, also list of our losses, which, owing to our men being by the side of camp-fires, were necessarily severe.

I am, Colonel, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Col. First Mississippi Cavalry, A. D.*

Commanding Post.

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LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM T. CLARK,

ASST. ADJUTANT-GENERAL, 17TH ARMY CORPS.

While Colonel Osband's report is correct in the main, he errs in some of the details, viz.:

He places the strength of the enemy at 140, when it should be 500, this fact being subsequently ascertained.

Speaking of the enemy's loss the report says, "Numbers were seen helped or thrown upon horses, and thus carried away," when the fact is the rebels had no horses with them, and the report itself says, "the rebels, 140 strong, under Captain Adams, of Caper's battalion, stole into our lines on foot."

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CAPTAIN RICHARD TAYLOR.

Captain Taylor was born in Connington, County of Somersetshire, England, September 19, 1837, coming to this country when quite young. He enlisted in Company "I", Fifty-fifth Illinois Infantry, October 7, 1861. He was with his regiment in the battle of Shiloh, April 6 and 7, 1862, receiving a painful wound during the first day's fighting, but refused to go to the

rear. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant for meritorious conduct in action. He was with his regiment during the siege of Corinth, participated in the battle of Russel House, and was with the army under General Sherman in its advance and occupation of Memphis, and with the army under General Grant in the campaign in West Tennessee and Northern Mississippi, in November and December, 1862. He was with his regiment in General Sherman's disastrous assault on Chickasaw Bluffs, and in the expedition under General McClernard up the Arkansas river, taking part in the assault on Arkansas Post, in which he received a severe gun-shot wound in the hand. He was detailed during the siege of Vicksburg for duty in the ordnance department under Lieutenant John C. Neely, being charged with the duty of distributing ammunition to the troops investing the city. After the surrender of Vicksburg he was placed in charge of the work of collecting, assorting and storing the captured arms, ammunition, &c.

He was discharged from the Fifty-fifth Illinois Infantry, December 1863, to accept promotion as First Lieutenant in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and assigned to Company C, was promoted to Captain, May 29, 1864, and assigned to Company D. In the engagement of Bouef River, December 1863, he was conspicuous in the thickest of the fight, and was severely wounded.

Captain Taylor came to the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry with the highest testimonials from the officers under whom he had previously served, and his career in the regiment was a complete fulfillment of their promises.

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE YAZOO EXPEDITION, JANUARY 31, TO MARCH 10, 1864.

The history of the war of the rebellion furnishes no more heroic example of pluck and indomitable perseverance than that displayed by the officers and men of this expedition, which penetrated hundreds of miles into the enemy's country, meeting and overcoming dangers and obstacles before which most men



would quail. Assailed in front and rear, and encompassed by unknown perils, they boldly pushed on, the enemy being confused and astounded by the very audacity of their movements. History furnishes few if any such tests of courage and bulldog tenacity as that displayed by the officers and men of this expedition, as shown by their heroic defense of Yazoo City on the 5th of March, 1864, as shown by the Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXII, Part I, Page 331, see map on following page.

Here the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, dismounted, held the fort against fearful odds—eight rebel regiments and two flaming batteries, all hurling shot and shell upon them, the ground slippery with the blood of their fallen comrades, and still undaunted, they met with scorn and derision, the rebel general's insolent demand to surrender. Such men were invincible, and the rebel general, at the close of the day's fighting, chagrined and dismayed, the hill-side strewn with his dead and wounded, withdrew from the conflict, leaving his dead and wounded where they fell.

This was a fight with some of the best troops in the confederate army, the famed Texas brigade, commanded by General L. S. Ross, of whom the South boasted no more gallant cavalry leader, and General Richardson's Tennessee brigade, the equals of any troops that ever faced a foe.

#### THE ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL OF THE YAZOO EXPEDITION.

This expedition was composed of the following troops, viz.:

The 11th Illinois Infantry, 21 commissioned officers and 339 enlisted men, commanded by Major George C. McKee; the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, (colored), 17 commissioned officers and 370 enlisted men, commanded by Colonel F. E. Peebles; the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, 20 commissioned officers and 300 enlisted men, commanded by Col. E. D. Osband, making a total force of 58 commissioned officers and 1,159 enlisted men. The expedition was conveyed up the Yazoo river by five gun-boats, commanded by Captain E. K. Owen, U. S. Navy, all under command of Colonel James H. Coates, Col. Eleventh Illinois Infantry.

The expedition left Vicksburg on the 31st of January, 1864, on transports provided for the purpose, and proceeded up the Yazoo river, arriving at Haynes Bluff on the evening of Feb-

ruary 1st. Haynes Bluff was then garrisoned in part by the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, not then fully organized.

On the following morning, February 2d, a detachment of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry under Major J. B. Cook, embarked with the expedition. This detachment consisted of 25 men of Company B, under Captain Andrew Emery, and 10 commissioned officers, detailed as recruiting officers, and to perform such other duty as they might be called upon to do. At this time the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was not fully organized, the Second and Third Battalions being mere skeletons in form. The officers, however, had been commissioned and placed on recruiting service, but they could not be mustered in until the requisite number of men had been enlisted. As this expedition seemed to offer a good opportunity to secure recruits to fill up the regiment, Major Cook asked and obtained permission to accompany it with a small detachment for that purpose.

The ten officers detailed to accompany the expedition as recruiting officers, were young men who had seen two years of active service in their old regiments, as non-commissioned officers, and who, in recognition of gallant services, were commissioned to positions in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.

On the morning of February 2d, the expedition proceeded on its way up the Yazoo river, the gun-boats taking the lead.

On the west side of this river the land is low and swampy, covered with a heavy growth of timber, and uninhabited. On the east side the ground is high, with occasional bluffs of considerable height, and covered with a stunted growth of trees and bushes. The east bank therefore offered great advantages for the enemy to harass the expedition. The men on the transports were screened behind temporary barricades, as it would be courting death for one to expose himself to the aim of the rebel sharp shooters who skulked in the bushes along the eastern bank.

As the transports neared the village of Sartatia, they were greeted by a fusillade of bullets fired from the bushes on the east bank. Colonel Coates' orders were to land and fight the enemy wherever found, and he did not purpose to allow this the first summons to battle to pass unnoticed, so he ordered the boats to run in at the landing place, where a detachment of the Eleventh Illinois, under Major McKee, and the Third U. S. detachment, under Major Cook, were disembarked.

The Third U. S. detachment having disembarked their horses, mounted and moved out to reconnoitre. In the meantime the rebels had left the cover of the bushes, mounted their horses and assumed the defensive. Major Cook charged with his detachment, when the rebels retreated, being hotly pursued through and beyond the village, one of them being killed and several wounded.

The force here encountered numbered about sixty. As it was now nearly sun-down, the troops were recalled and embarked. The whole fleet remained there that night.

On the following morning, February 3d, the fleet proceeded on up the river, nothing worthy of note occurring until Liverpool Heights was reached, where the enemy was found in large force, consisting of artillery and cavalry, posted in a strong position on the bluffs. The gun-boats were permitted to pass the enemies' position unmolested, but as the transports rounded the curve, bringing them within range of the enemies' guns, a terrific fire was opened upon them, which threatened to demolish the boats, but the engines were quickly reversed, and the boats backed down out of range.

The gun-boats could do nothing in this fight, as their guns could not be elevated sufficiently to reach the rebel battery on the bluff.

Colonel Coates now determined to disembark his troops, make a land attack and dislodge the enemy from his position if possible.

The troops having been disembarked, formed in two columns, the Eleventh Illinois infantry, Major McKee commanding, formed the left wing, and the Eighth Louisiana infantry, colored, Colonel Peebles commanding, formed the right wing, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry detachment, Major Cook commanding, took the advance.

Major Cook soon encountered the enemy's outpost, a force of 75 or 100 men, (cavalry) with whom he had a spirited skirmish, driving them back into the main force, which was found to be strongly posted in the hills.

As Major Cook drove the enemy's outpost back into the hills, Major McKee brought up the Eleventh Illinois Infantry on the double quick, followed by the Eighth Louisiana, colored, led

by Colonel Peebles. These regiments, availing themselves of such protection as the nature of the ground afforded, deployed and advanced on the enemy's position. Major Cook dismounted his men, sent his horses to the rear, and led his men into the hills, fighting as infantry.

The rebels were also dismounted, having left their horses in a place of safety, they had also strengthened their position, naturally strong, by hastily constructing barricades of logs, large rocks, etc. In addition they had several cannon, light field pieces, which they were able to use with deadly effect.

As our two infantry regiments approached the enemy's position, they met a terrific fire, against which they were unable to make headway, when Major McKee, leading a portion of his regiment, made a gallant dash to flank the rebel position, but in the face of greatly superior numbers, the artillery fire and the broken condition of the ground, he was compelled to fall back, sustaining some loss in killed and wounded. The enemy fought on the defensive, refusing to come out in the open, but at times our men pressed them so closely that their position was rendered extremely uncomfortable. The fight was thus kept up until the sun dropped below the tree-tops, neither side gaining any decided advantage, when a summons to retire was received from Colonel Coates, and the command returned to the boats.

It being evident that our small force, unaided by artillery, could not dislodge the enemy from his strong position, the troops were embarked and the transports crossed to the west side of the river, where they tied up for the night.

From prisoners captured in the fight that day it was ascertained that the force we had engaged was the Sixth and Ninth Texas regiments, commanded respectively by Colonels Wharton and Berry, and belonging to General Ross' brigade, and that the remainder of this brigade, the First and Third Texas regiments, commanded respectively by Colonels Whitfield and Mabry, were then in that vicinity, with General Ross at their head. It was safe therefore to conclude that General Ross would be on the scene the next morning with the balance of his brigade to oppose the advance of the expedition, which proved only too true.

## COLONEL COATES SENDS DISPATCHES TO VICKSBURG.

Sergeants Vincent and Trendall, Company B, 3d U. S. Colored Cavalry, slip through the enemys lines in the night and carry a message to General McArthur, at Vicksburg, a ride of 60 miles.

About 10 o'clock, that night, February 3d, while the fleet was tied up on the west side of the river, Colonel Coates sent for Major Cook and requested him to select two of his most trusty men, who would be willing to undertake the dangerous mission of carrying dispatches back to Vicksburg.

This mission was a very hazardous one, and would require men of tact, discretion and nerve, also possessing a thorough knowledge of the country.

Travel was impracticable on the west side of the river, on account of intersecting rivers and impassable swamps, therefore the messengers would have to make their way to Vicksburg on the east side, which swarmed with rebel cavalry, and whose pickets and patrols guarded every avenue of communication.

For this duty, Major Cook, after consulting Captain Emery, selected Washington Vincent and Isaac Trendall, both of whom were sergeants in Captain Emery's company. The nature of the duty and the dangers attending it, being fully explained to them, they readily accepted it.

Both of these men were mulattoes, young, brave and quick witted, and were raised on plantations in that vicinity; they knew the country well over which they would travel to reach Vicksburg.

Everything being in readiness for their departure, one of the Steamer's small boats was lowered, in which the two men were quietly rowed across the river, where they were landed in the shadow of some over-hanging trees, from which point they disappeared in the darkness, left to act for themselves—thrown on their own resources. It must not be supposed, however, that these men undertook this dangerous mission in the Uniform of Union soldiers. No, they wore the garb of plantation darkies, and sewed under one of the numerous patches on the baggy trousers of each were duplicate copies of the message to General McArthur.

They remained quiet where the boat left them until satisfied that the movement had not been noticed by the rebel pickets,

then they crept cautiously up the bank, reaching a position behind some bushes near the road, which ran parallel with the river. They could hear the rebel pickets as they rode back and forth. The road was closely guarded by a chain of mounted pickets. They would have to cross this road to gain the open country beyond, and here they encountered their greatest difficulty in evading the rebel guards. Finding that their present position presented no chance to run the guard, they left it, going farther down the river, where they hoped the guards would be farther apart and less vigilant. Moving stealthily along in the dark, keeping in the deep shadow of the trees, they stumbled into a deep ditch or ravine, which they followed, crawling on their hands and knees, until it brought them to a culvert passing under the road; creeping through this culvert with some difficulty, they emerged on the other side of the road, where the tall grass and weeds completely screened them from view.

From this safe retreat they could make out the dim outlines of the mounted picket, standing within twenty feet of the place where they had passed through the culvert. From this point they made their way into the open country, crossing ditches and fences, where horsemen could not follow.

Feeling now comparatively safe from immediate detection, they boldly struck out for the nearest plantation, their object being to procure mounts—horses or mules, on which to continue the journey.

A glimmering light in the distance seemed to beckon them on, following it, they soon found themselves in close proximity to the plantation buildings.

Carefully reconnoitering the premises, they discovered four fine horses, bridled and saddled, tied to the fence in front of the house. On closer inspection, the owners of these horses—four rebel soldiers—as revealed through the window, were being entertained by the inmates of the house.

After making this discovery, Vincent and Trendall quietly approached the horses, untied and led them some distance from the house out of hearing, then mounted, rode away each leading one horse, thus leaving the rebel soldiers no means of pursuit.

Some faint idea may be formed of the surprise and wrath

of the rebel troopers at the mysterious disappearance of their horses, but augmented by the exasperating thought of being left afoot miles from camp, the most vivid imagination will fail to comprehend the situation. It may be presumed, however, that the next time they left their horses "to go in and see the girls," they exercised more caution. But what was their loss was Uncle Sam's gain, for the horses were turned over to the regimental quartermaster and branded with the letters U. S. thus transferring their services to the cause of the Union.

In recognition of the great service these horses rendered on the night they changed owners, they were assigned to special duty at headquarters, and two of them, surviving the war, were honorably mustered out with the regiment, and returned to the pursuits of civil life.

It is hoped that their later days were passed in peace and contentment, browsing the herbage of their native heath.

Finding themselves well mounted, the captured horses proving fine animals, the two couriers made good progress, and by changing their saddles occasionally to the led horses, they maintained a high rate of speed, and by avoiding the main traveled roads, taking byways, and making short cuts through plantations, they evaded the rebel pickets and patrols, and reached Vicksburg in safety.

They delivered the message to General McArthur, receiving a receipt therefor. The receipt showed that the message was delivered at 8:35 a. m., February 4, 1864. The record shows that they traveled sixty miles in 10 hours including the distance traveled on foot and the delays in getting through the enemies' lines. After a short rest and refreshments, they proceeded to Haynes Bluff, headquarters of the regiment, and reported to Colonel Osband.

Subsequently, February 10th, they rejoined their company at Yazoo City, going up the river with Colonel Osband and the balance of the regiment.

## RUNNING THE BLOCKADE.

*Pandemonium on the Yazoo.*

Returning to the fleet, which we left tied up for the night on the west side of the river, a short distance below Liverpool Heights, waiting for what the morrow might bring forth, as every one expected hard fighting on that day.

The morning of February 4th, dawned calm and clear, in striking contrast to the storm that was soon to break.

The soldiers on the transports, in obedience to an early call, were preparing their morning meal and looking to their guns and ammunition long before the sun gilded the tree-tops. Colonel Coates had decided to run the blockade—pass the rebel position on Liverpool Heights, and preparations were being made for the dash. Temporary barricades were formed on the transports, using for that purpose such material, wood, boxes of hardtack, knapsack, etc., as were at hand on the boats.

When everything was ready, the boats under full pressure of steam, the fleet swung out into the stream, the gun-boats taking the lead.

When abreast of the bluffs, where the fight of the previous day took place, the enemy, after permitting the gun-boats to pass unmolested, opened a terrific fire with artillery and small arms, concentrating their fire on the transports, demolishing the wood-work on the upper decks, and scattering death and destruction on every side. The fire was promptly returned by the troops on the transports, but they were placed at a great disadvantage. The rebels on the bluffs could not be seen, they fired from behind trees, rocks, and from wherever they could find cover, but the storm of bullets from the transports found every nook and cranny along the face of the bluffs, many of them finding lodgment in the anatomy of an enemy.

When the battle opened, the gun-boats returned and added the roar of their guns to the conflict. The battle was now on in earnest.

It was like pandemonium turned loose. The scene was exciting and awe-inspiring to the highest degree. The booming of cannon and the crash of small arms, the defiant yells of the combatants, echoed back from the silent depths of the uninhab-



ited swamp on the west side of the river, the shrill whistles and labored breathing of the steamers as their huge paddle-wheels lashed the murky waters of the Yazoo into a foaming torrent, the flaming bluffs, volcanic-like, vomiting forth sheets of fire, enveloped the whole scene in a pall of black smoke, shutting out the light of day as though to screen from the christian world the sight of such wild orgies, wherein it seemed that all the devils in his satanic majesty's kingdom were holding high carnival. The place itself was in keeping with the scene being remote from the habitation of man; the silent swamp and the uninhabited hills, between which flowed the dark waters of the Yazoo, were the only witnesses to this drama of war.

The brave pilots, upon whose skill and nerve so much depended, stood unflinchingly at their posts, though bullets and splinters flew thickly around them.

As anticipated, General Ross had, during the previous night, concentrated his entire force on the bluffs, in expectation of another land attack; he had also prepared to oppose with all his might the further advance of the expedition, both by land and water.

The transports were probably eight or ten minutes under fire, but the men on the boats thought it an age. When beyond range of the enemy's guns the boats slackened speed, and an examination made of their condition. It was found, however, that the boats had sustained no serious damage to their machinery or running gear.

Two men were killed and quite a number wounded.

The dead men were buried at Yazoo City on the arrival of the fleet at that place.

In thus leaving the enemy in their rear and pushing on into new and unknown dangers, seemed a reckless proceeding, but the fearless spirit that dominated the command quailed at no danger.

When within five or six miles of Yazoo City, a halt was called, and Captain Owen, with two of his gun-boats, proceeded on up the river to a point opposite Yazoo City, where he drew the fire of a land battery, two of the shots taking effect on one of the gun-boats, but inflicted slight damage. The gun-boats returned the fire, but with what effect was not known.

On re-joining the fleet, Captain Owen reported that Yazoo City was occupied by a large force of the enemy, whereupon, the fleet moved back down the river to a point nearly opposite Liverpool, where it remained until the following day.

On the 5th, 6th, and 7th, the fleet occupied different positions between Liverpool and Yazoo City, watching the movements of the enemy, nothing worthy of interest transpiring.

On the 8th, Major Cook and his cavalry detachment were landed on the west side of the river, with orders to scout the country along that bank to a point opposite Yazoo City. This force was landed about six miles below Yazoo City.

Major Cook had proceeded but a short distance when he learned that a small force of rebel cavalry had been scouting on that side of the river, and that they were then at the ferry, on their return to Yazoo City, that this force was commanded by Major Whitfield, of the Texas Legion.

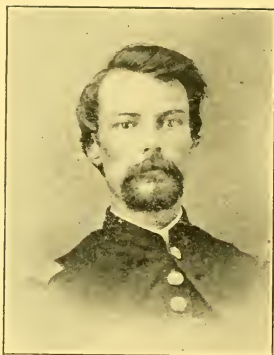
With the hope of intercepting them before a crossing could be effected, Major Cook put his troops to the gallop, and was soon upon the scene, too late, however, to prevent the enemy from crossing, the last boat load being then just in the act of disembarking on the other side. Four of the rebel cavalrymen, though, were captured, together with their horses, they having been left until the boat could return for them. The debarkation of those on the east side was greatly accelerated by the long range carbines of Major Cook's troopers, which sent them scurrying in every direction for shelter.

The enemy having thus escaped him, Major Cook decided to cross the river and continue the chase, and he called for volunteers to swim the river and bring back the boat, to which many men responded, but only two were accepted, that number being deemed sufficient. It is to be regretted that the names of these men cannot now be recalled. Divesting themselves of their outside garments, the men plunged into the water, which was ice-cold, it being in February. As the enemy were lurking on the other side of the river, a rapid fire was kept up to cover the movement.

The men reached the boat in safety, but the rebels had destroyed the means of propelling it, they had cut the rope, which had floated away.



THE C. SPAIN-  
LIND & C.



CAPT. C. C. SPAIDS,  
Third U. S. C. C

It must be explained that this ferry was simply a small scow or flat boat, on which not more than ten horses could be carried at a time, and was propelled by means of a rope stretched from bank to bank.

There being no oars, the men procured some pieces of plank with which they attempted to paddle the boat across the river, but in midstream they lost control of the boat in the swift current and were carried down the river, only being rescued on reaching the fleet, six miles below, where they were taken off by a rescuing party sent out by one of the gun-boats.

When rescued, the men were terribly chilled from exposure to the cold in their soaked and almost naked condition.

Failing to effect a crossing, Major Cook returned to the transport with his command, taking the four prisoners and their horses with him.

The horses captured on this scout were fine animals, one of them being a thorough-bred stallion. This reconnaissance developed the fact that the rebels had evacuated Yazoo City, and that the force encountered at the ferry, being an outpost, were the last to leave the city. It was evident that General Ross and his forces had been called away to operate elsewhere.

The next morning, February 9th, the fleet moved up the river and occupied Yazoo City without opposition.

Colonel Osband arrived on the 10th, with the balance of the regiment, coming up the river by boat, and meeting no opposition, the enemy having withdrawn.

This increased the cavalry force to about three hundred men and officers. Colonel Coates was so well pleased with the conduct of the small detachment under Major Cook, that he asked that the balance of the regiment be sent to him.

Under such leaders as Colonel Osband and Major Cook, ably seconded by the junior officers, all noted for their dash and daring, it did not take this regiment long to come to the front, and it was soon recognized as one of the most efficient cavalry regiments in the western army.

Leaving Yazoo City on the 11th, the fleet started up the river, the cavalry marching over land, covering both sides of the river, the force being about equally divided, Colonel Osband commanding the force on the east side, and Major Cook that

on the west side of the river. The boats regulated their speed to that of the cavalry, which kept a little in advance. The cavalry had orders not to go beyond supporting distance of the boats. In one instance, however, Major Cook, in taking a short cut where the river almost doubled in its course, got some distance ahead of the boats, and being in an exposed position, the advance gun-boat, mistaking them for the enemy, opened fire with four long range guns, the shot, though, went wide of the mark. The cavalry moved steadily on, not knowing they were the object fired at, but the firing continuing, the shot coming closer as the gunners got the range, the cavalry halted and raised a white flag, when the firing ceased.

At this point a halt was called, when the commanding officers all met on the flag ship, and arranged a code of signals, whereby future mistakes of this kind would be avoided. When Major Cook boarded the flag ship, Captain Owen apologized to him for firing on his command, to which Major Cook replied, "O, it's all right, I knew you couldn't hit us." The captain taking this as a reflection on the marksmanship of his gunners, responded with some caustic remarks more forceable than polite.

But the matter was finally amicably settled over a glass of the ship's grog.

After this somewhat exciting and interesting episode, the expedition resumed its onward march, nothing worthy of note occurring the remainder of that day and the next, but in the afternoon of the 13th, indications of a considerable force of the enemy was discovered on the east side of the river when Major Cook and his detachment were transferred to the east side to join Colonel Osband.

Thus united, the regiment moved forward and soon encountered a regiment of rebel cavalry, five hundred strong, commanded by Colonel A. H. Forrest, a brother of the notorious rebel general of that name. Here a sharp fight took place. It was a fight between colored troops and a portion of the command that gave no quarter at Fort Pillow.

The officers who led the squadrons of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, had, while in their former regiments, fought Forrest's cavalry on many hotly contested fields, and they knew

his tactics. The fight was fast and furious from start to finish.

Though the black troopers were greatly outnumbered, but their superior discipline and skill of their officers, overmatched their opponents, who soon found themselves outmaneuvered, flanked, and their formation broken.

Quick to take advantage of the openings left by their less skilled opponents, the officers of the black troopers hurled their squadrons upon them with a force that could not be resisted. Several spirited charges were made on both sides, the most gallant, perhaps, was that led by Lieutenant James S. Matthews, of company A, 3rd U. S.

When he shook out his blankets that night, which he carried in a roll on his saddle, he found that several bullets had passed through them, one bullet having lodged therein, which he keeps as a souvenir of the war.

In this engagement the regiment suffered a loss of five enlisted men killed and ten wounded, also quite a number of horses killed and wounded.

The enemy's loss must have been heavy, both in killed and wounded, besides a loss of fifteen taken prisoners, and withal they were badly shaken up.

The cavalry embarked at this point, and the fleet continued on up the river, arriving at Greenwood the 14th, where the whole command disembarked and went into camp. This was the objective point of the expedition.

Greenwood is situated near the headwater of the Yazoo, two hundred miles from its mouth.

The Yazoo is formed by the union of the Tallahatchie and Yallahusha rivers, and it traverses one of the most fertile regions of Mississippi, devoted almost exclusively to the raising of cotton.

On disembarking, at Greenwood, the command was welcomed by Colonel Greenwood LeFlore, the old chief of the Choctaw's, who owned an extensive plantation near the town, also a large number of slaves. The town was named in honor of the old chief, who, when his tribe was moved to the Indian Territory, elected to remain in his old home, which was endeared to him by so many associations, so he resigned the chieftancy of his tribe. The old chief had remained true to the Union.

He had fought with General Jackson, "Old Hickory," in the Florida war, and had imbibed a great love for the Union and the flag. He had preserved a small American flag, keeping it concealed in his house, and when the toops landed, he met them, waving the flag, and raising his hands, exclaimed, "Thank God, I have lived to see the old flag again carried by United States soldiers. Take of my supplies what you will. I give freely. My negroes, too, shall fight for the Union." And so they did. After that the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry had many men on its rolls, who bore the old chief's name. Colonel LeFlore, for such the old chief was called by the people far and near, entertained the officers of the command at his palatial residence, setting before them the best of everything his house afforded.

He told the officers that he had promised General Jackson that he would always remain loyal to the government of the United States, and that he had kept his promise, notwithstanding the threats and persecutions of the ultra secessionists.

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#### A RECONNAISSANCE.

*An attempt to open communication with the forces under General Smith.*

At daylight on the morning of the 16th, Colonel Osband, with the effective force of the regiment, 250 men and officers, by direction of Colonel Coates, left camp to make a reconnoissance in the direction of Grenada, in fact to proceed to that place if found practicable to do so; the object being to open communication with the cavalry forces of General William Sooy Smith, who was to have left Memphis on February 1st, and whose line of march, it was thought, would be through or near Grenada, which place was about 35 miles northeast of Greenwood.

It was necessary to move with great caution, as it was known that the rebel cavalry under General Forrest, were concentrating to give battle to General Smith. Therefore Major Cook, with two companies, was assigned to the advance.

Nothing occurred to interrupt the march until some time in



the afternoon, when, as Major Cook's advance struck the main road leading into Grenada, and some five or six miles from that place, a regiment of rebel cavalry was encountered. It being in the woods, the two commands came face to face before either knew of the other's presence, neither could they judge of their relative strength. The rebels were marching in a loose, careless manner, evidently not suspecting the presence of an enemy, consequently they were not prepared for the reception they received, while on the contrary, Major Cook had his men under ready control, and was able to commence hostilities on the instant, by well directed volleys.

When saddles are being emptied, men throwing up their arms and falling, the best of disciplined troops will waver. Colonel Osband coming to the front with the balance of the regiment, the squadrons deploring to the right and left, firing as they advanced, the enemy was thrown into hopeless confusion, and retired from the field, going in the direction of Grenada. They were pursued about a mile, when, it being ascertained that General Forrest was then in Grenada with his entire command, 6,000 or 7,000 strong it was deemed unadvisable to proceed further. So making a rightabout face, the command returned to Greenwood, reaching that place at 2:30 o'clock the next morning.

It transpired that the force encountered was one of the regiments of General Forrest's command, and were then on their way to join the main command then at Grenada; that General Forrest was concentrating his cavalry at that place, preparatory to intercepting the force under General Smith, whom he met a few days later some forty miles from Grenada, where an engagement took place, and that General Smith, after making a feeble resistance, retreated back to Memphis.

So what worked the ruin of General Smith, saved the Yazoo expedition, for had General Forrest turned from his course one day's march when near Greenwood, utter annihilation would in all probability have been the fate of the Yazoo expedition. But that wily general had bigger game in view. And had General Smith left Memphis at the appointed time, the way then being open, a staggering blow would have been dealt the confederacy, the moral and military effect of which would have been far-reaching in its results.

## CAPTAIN C. C. SPAIDS.

Captain Spaid was born in Oswego County, State of New York. He removed with his parents to Chicago in 1847, where he was educated, graduating from the first High School established in that city. On completing his education he traveled over the West, locating in the Rocky Mountain country, where the echo of the guns of Fort Sumter, vibrating from peak to peak, warned him that the flag was in danger, and returning to Chicago, he enlisted in Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, which company was subsequently attached to General Grant's headquarters as that general's body guard, and served as such until after the fall of Vicksburg. In this company, noted for its soldierly appearance and perfection in drill, he rose to the rank of Lieutenant. This promotion came to him by merit alone. He resigned his commission in the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, in the fall of 1863, to accept a captaincy in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanding company F, of that regiment until March 1865, when failing health compelled him to quit the service, and resigning his commission, he returned to the pursuits of civil life, leaving an army record bright with brilliant deeds. For soldierly bearing, bravery, dash and duty well performed few officers equaled and none excelled the subject of this sketch.

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CHAPTER VII.

*The Expedition Returns to Yazoo City.*

During the 17 and 18th, the regiment remained in camp, it being the first season of rest enjoyed since leaving Haynes Bluff.

In the meantime the transports were being loaded with cotton and forage, the latter for the horses while en transit. The cotton was taken from disloyal citizens; much of it, however, was the property of the Confederate States Government. On the morning of the 19th, the infantry and a part of the cavalry embarked and the expedition started down the river, enroute to Yazoo City. Major Cook, however, with 200 men and officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, was ordered to proceed overland to Carrollton and thence to Blackhawk, and to rejoin the fleet at Sidon, a

river town some 30 or 40 miles below Greenwood. Carrollton and Blackhawk were interior towns, the former about fifteen and the latter about 25 miles from Greenwood.

Major Cook made an early start, leaving Greenwood before it was fairly daylight on the morning of the 19th, the fleet not getting under way until later in the day. Moving with his customary caution and dispatch, Major Cook dashed into Carrollton early in the forenoon, surprising and capturing 20 prisoners and as many horses. The men captured at this place, were stragglers from Forrest's cavalry, also several officers, who were recruiting for the confederate army.

Leaving Carrollton, the command moved briskly on toward Blackhawk. It was learned that there were a large number of rebel soldiers in and around Blackhawk, nearly all of whom were stragglers and deserters from different rebel regiments, and that they were well armed and mounted, and that they had organized themselves into a sort of home guard, which also included many citizens. It was quite likely therefore that they would give battle, or what was more probable, that they would ambush the command at some favorable point along the road, as it seemed they had received notice of the approach of the scouting party.

Lieutenant Fernald was given the advance with 25 men of company B, and ordered to move rapidly but cautiously, lest he run into an ambuscade. Much of the way was through woods, the ground rough and hilly, offering many advantages for an ambushed foe. About 2 p. m. Lieutenant Fernald surprised a rebel picket of a few men, who, after firing a few shots, mounted their horses and fled, going towards Blackhawk. Moving forward to the crest of a hill, which afforded a view of the village of Blackhawk. Lieutenant Fernald could see that the streets were thronged with men and horses. Returning he reported what he had seen to Major Cook, at the same time requesting permission to charge into the town with his company, which request was granted, Major Cook following with the balance of the command. As Lieutenant Fernald and his men dashed over the crest of the hill, coming into view of those in the town, there was a great commotion among them. Some would-be leaders were making frantic efforts to rally their disorganized forces, but before any sort of a formation could be effected, the black troopers were

upon them, firing and yelling, and before the balance of the command got within striking distance, Lieutenant Fernald and his men had them on the run.

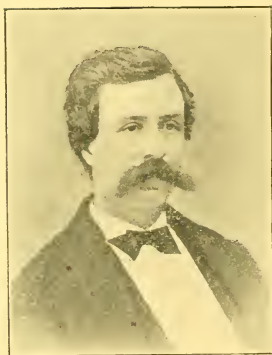
The result of this skirmish was six of the enemy killed, a number wounded, and 23 taken prisoners, also 30 horses and mules captured.

Leaving Blackhawk, the command, now pretty well encumbered with prisoners and captured stock, horses and mules, took up line of march toward Sidon, 15 miles distant, but night coming on, the command went into camp five miles from Blackhawk, having marched forty miles that day, engaged in two spirited skirmishes, and captured forty-three prisoners and seventy head of horses and mules.

Resuming the march on the following morning, February 20th, the command reached Sidon about 10 a. m., where the transports were waiting to take them on board. The embarkation of the men and horses was soon effected, when the fleet started down the river. The run down the river to Yazoo City was uneventful, but rendered slow and tedious on account of the many short curves in the river and overhanging trees. The same difficulties were experienced going up the river.

On the way down, small scouting parties of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry were frequently landed to scout the country on the east bank. These scouting parties captured quite a number of horses and mules, also a few beef cattle, the latter being killed for the use of the troops. The expedition reached Yazoo City on Sunday, February 28th, about 10 a. m. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, however, was landed several miles above the city, on the east bank, with orders to move down the valley, reconnoitre, and picket all the roads leading into the city. In the meantime the fleet moved down to a point in front of the city, where the gun-boats anchored out in the stream, and the transports tied up at the landing place, and the infantry were disembarked and went into camp on the river front. Colonel Osband, after reconnoitering and posting pickets as directed, returned to the city and camped his command on the river front a little north of the city.





CAPT. JESSE BRAINARD.  
Third U. S. C. C.

## YAZOO CITY AND ITS ENVIRONMENTS.

At the time of which we write, Yazoo City was a town of perhaps 1,500 or 2,000 inhabitants. Situated in the beautiful valley of the Yazoo, pleasing to the eye and highly picturesque, this place presented many features of natural beauty. At its very door flowed the Yazoo, its highway of commerce.

Before grim war disrupted the country, regular packets plied between Yazoo City and Vicksburg, touching at all intermediate points, the distance being about one hundred miles. The only other channel of communication with the outside world was by wagon road.

At this point the valley narrowed to about a mile in width, gradually sloping back, on the east, to a range of high, rugged hills from whose summit a view of the city and valley, miles in extent, could be had, and overlooking, further to the east, north and south, a wide expanse of table land, broken here and there by alternate ridges and ravines. From this point the beholder could not fail to be impressed with the grandeur of the scene.

On the nearest promontory, jutting out into the valley as though nature had placed it there for some special purpose, was a fortified position, fort or redoubt, which had been constructed by the confederates. This fort occupied a commanding position, and could be used to defend the city from a land or river attack. Mention is made of this fort because it was soon to become the scene of one of the most stubbornly fought battles of the war; plan of fort, troops engaged, etc. is shown on another page.

This part of Mississippi, known as the Yazoo delta, unsurpassed in fertility of soil, and only equalled by the famed valley of the Nile, was the richest cotton producing section of the South.

This region abounded in plantations of vast area, their owners counting their acres by the thousands, to cultivate which required the labor of thousands of slaves. The owners of these plantations rarely lived on them, except perhaps for a short time during the hunting season, their sole care and management being left to overseers.

It was here that slavery was found in its most revolting form. The poor whites lived in the hill country, where they eked out a scanty and most miserable existence. They were, however, all

ultra secessionists, and knew no law but that laid down by the slave owners, to whom they cringed and crawled with all the servility of serfs.

In Yazoo City was found a motley crowd of old "mossbacks," types of poor white trash, too old or decrepid for service in the rebel army. These dilapidated specimens of humanity, poor people of a slave-cursed country, were lounging about or sitting on goods boxes in front of tavern or store, whittling, frescoing the sidewalk with tobacco juice and discussing "de wah." They were yet even loth to believe that Vicksburg had surrendered, which place many of them had never visited, and they had unbounded confidence in the invincibility of the rebel army and of the ultimate success of secession. The ignorance, stupidity and superstition of these people was deplorable, and furnished the most convincing proof of the blighting effects of slavery.

Yazoo City was rightly termed the "hot bed of secession." The rabid sentiment of the poor people who had everything to gain and nothing to lose by the downfall of slavery, was provokingly manifested on every hand. This was the first Union force to visit the city, which up to this time, being isolated from the track of the Union army, had escaped the ravages of war, but these people were yet to feel the heavy hand of the Federal government, and to pay the penalty of their disloyalty. Subsequently Yazoo City became the scene of many cavalry raids, teaching the people the bitter consequences of rebellion and war.

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#### A RUNNING FIGHT ON THE BENTON ROAD.

##### *Major Cook, with Forty Men, Stampedes a Texas Brigade.*

As previously stated, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, after picketing the roads leading into the city, went into camp north of the city, where the men were congratulating themselves on having a little rest, when Major Cook received orders to take a detachment of forty men and make a reconnaissance on the Benton road. Major Cook selected for this duty Captain Frank Cook of Company E, and twenty of his men, and Lieutenant S.H. Pettengill of Company D, and twenty of his men, making a total force of forty enlisted men and two commissioned officers.



Major Cook having no knowledge of the country, Colonel Coates furnished him with a guide, a man named Hildreth reporting to him for this duty.

This Mr. Hildreth claimed to be a citizen of Yazoo city, and an ex-sheriff of that county. Hildreth told Major Cook, as they rode along, that he was of northern birth, in consequence of which, he was looked upon with suspicion by his secession neighbors, though he had lived there many years and had married a southern woman. He also stated that a number of rebel soldiers had stolen into the city the night before and carried off his brother whom they mistook for him, and that he had accepted the position as guide with the hope of finding and rescuing his brother, all of which may or may not have been true, at any rate there was no evidence to show he purposely led the scouting party into danger.

Leaving Yazoo City, Major Cook took the road known as the Benton plank road, which led in an easterly direction and past the fort on the hill previously mentioned. All went well until they reached a point some five or six miles from the city, when, on turning a sharp bend in the road, they came unexpectedly upon the enemy, numbering fifty or sixty men, who had halted in the road and dismounted. The surprise seemed to be mutual. The officers of the black regiment, however, were never much surprised at anything, and were the first to act, getting in the first volley while the enemy were mounting, following it up by a charge that sent them to the right about on the double-quick, But a still greater surprise was in store for Major Cook and his men, who following up the fleeing enemy, soon found themselves confronted by a whole brigade of cavalry, consisting of the 1st, 3rd, 6th and 9th Texas regiments, fully 2,000 strong, commanded by General L. S. Ross in person. General Ross was a cavalry leader of wide experience, undoubted courage and recognized ability. This brigade was the pride and boast of the confederate army. It transpired that Major Cook had first struck the advance guard of this brigade, which was moving to occupy Yazoo city, not knowing that the Union forces were already there, but, on the contrary, believing that they were far away up the Yazoo river, hence their lax manner of marching, resulting in the surprise and confusion into which they had been thrown by the charge of the black troopers.

As the black troopers rushed the rebel advance back, cloud of dust raised by the clatter of so many horses, prevented the main force of the enemy from forming any kind of an estimate of the numbers of their assailants, and they were undecided whether to fight or run away.

It was said that, at the time the collision occurred, General Ross was seated on the ground by the road-side, examining a map showing the topography of the country, and that his command had come to a temporary halt, his men being dismounted. At any rate, the momentary confusion into which the enemy had been thrown, gave Major Cook an opportunity, which he quickly seized, to put his men on the defensive. From the position he occupied, Major Cook could see beyond the cloud of dust, showing the roads and woods full of rebel cavalry, and he instantly realized the danger of his position as well as the danger that menaced the command back in the city, unless, indeed, they could be warned in time to prepare to meet it.

The guide, Mr. Hildreth, being mounted on a fine horse, Major Cook dispatched him with a message to Colonel Coates, informing that officer of the situation, and advising him to get his men into the fort on the hill as quickly as possible, and that he (Cook) would fall back, fighting, until he reached the fort, where he would make a stand.

On receiving his instructions, the guide dashed away, his thoroughbred literally flying over the road. He was evidently only too glad of the opportunity to get out of the fracas, and his speed was further accelerated by a twelve-pound shot from one of the enemy's guns, which tore the top out of a large oak tree under which he and Major Cook were standing when he received his instructions. The rebels were quick to get a battery into position on a hill to the right of the road, from which they commenced to throw solid shot and shell, getting the range on Major Cook's position almost from the start, and it was one of the first shots that struck the tree under which Major Cook and the guide were standing.

At such times, events occur with lightning-like rapidity, and the officer with quick perception, cool head, and prompt to act, rises equal to the occasion. The rebels soon recovered from their temporary confusion, and presented a battle front that showed

the skill and experience of their commander. Flanking parties and skirmish lines quickly moved out, and soon the rattle of musketry and the boom of cannon awoke the echoes of the surrounding hills. In the meantime Major Cook withdrew his men to a point out of range of the enemy's battery, where he divided his force into two squads of twenty men each, under Captain Cook and Lieutenant Pettengill, respectively, with instructions to make a stand at every available point, deliver their fire and fall back alternatively. Thus a firing line was constantly facing the enemy, who receiving a volley every few minutes from some unexpected quarter, were held in check. The country was favorable for this sort of warfare, being hilly, broken by deep ravines, and covered by a scrubby growth of trees. After making several reckless charges, exposing themselves to the well directed fire of the black troopers, they exercised more caution.

Had General Ross known that his famous brigade was being held at bay by a mere squad of "nigger" cavalry, he would undoubtedly have felt cheap. A spirited dash at any time, well supported, would have utterly crushed the little squad opposing him. But such are the chances of war. Few commanders have the hardihood to rush their men into unknown dangers. To the black troopers and their white officers, capture meant death, and as the Texans were known to take no "nigger" prisoners, the black soldiers had to face the alternative, victory or death, for had it come to a rout they would have been run down and killed without mercy. As it was, however, five of the black troopers, having their horses shot under them, fell into the hands of the enemy and were murdered.

At almost every stand they made, one or more of the black troopers went down before the fire of the enemy, but before their deadly aim many of their opponents also fell. Saddles were emptied and the riderless horses, foam-flecked and frenzied, dashed hither and thither between the contending forces. The enemy pressed on, coming closer and closer, when the black troopers, with their ranks thinned, their carbine ammunition exhausted, had recourse to their big army revolvers, which, in point of range, were about equal to the rebel shot-guns. At this critical juncture Captain Cook was shot, receiving a charge of buck-shot in his hip, at close range, which soon filled his boot with

blood, and though faint from loss of blood, he kept his saddle and said nothing. Fortunately, however, Major Cook discovered his condition and ordered him to the rear, fearing he might faint from loss of blood and fall into the hands of the enemy.

Thus the retreat was conducted, contesting every foot of the ground until the fort was reached, where they dismounted and took position therein, sending their horses back to the camp near the city. This fort was simply an earth embankment thrown up on the hill, with a deep ditch extending around on the outside.

Almost immediately after reaching the fort, Major Cook was joined by Colonels Coates and Osband, the former with the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, and the latter with the balance of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, dismounted. They came up the hill on the double quick, starting immediately on receipt of Major Cook's message sent by the guide. As these troops entered the fort and manned the works, they yelled defiance to the foe, who came to a halt about eight hundred yards from the fort.

The Eleventh Illinois Infantry was the crack regiment of the "Sucker State," and had won fame on the bloody fields of Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, and numerous other less important battles and skirmishes, in every one of which they reflected credit on the army and the great State from which they hailed. The rebels, seeing now that they were up against something, commenced to maneuver for position. They took position on the adjacent hills east of the fort, keeping well under cover. One part of their force, however, taking position on a hill north of the Benton road and nearest to the fort, about 1,000 yards, becoming aggressive, Lieutenant Frank Calais, with his Company A, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, dismounted, was ordered to move out and make a demonstration, with a view to develop their position and strength.

Lieutenant Calais moved his company under cover of a deep ravine until nearly opposite the enemy's position, when, deploying his men, he commenced the ascent of the hill, being yet partially screened by the scrubby growth of underbrush growing on the side of the hill. But the rebels, lying concealed in the brush along the crest of the hill, were alert, and soon the sharp crack of the union carbines denoted that the battle was on.

As Lieutenant Calais and his men advanced, they found them-





CAPT. HOWARD COOK,  
Third U. S. C. C.

selves opposed by a heavy line of skirmishers, with whom they had a sharp engagement, but night coming on, the firing ceased. The enemy disappeared from the hill, faded away in the gathering gloom, to go into camp for the night.

Leaving a sufficient force to garrison the fort, the command returned to their camp on the river front, the men sleeping on their arms that night. Colonel Coates held a consultation with the regimental commanders, Captain Owen, commanding gun-boats, and Major Cook were also present. The situation was discussed at this meeting, and from all indications it seemed evident that the enemy were gathering in force for an attack, and hot work was looked forward to. But the morrow dawned bright and peaceful, and the day passed, bringing no demonstration from the enemy.

The troops were disposed in a manner to best meet an attack and to defend the city and its approaches.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was assigned the important duty of holding the Benton road and the fort. The infantry was assigned the duty of guarding the Lexington road on the north and the Vicksburg road on the south, and mounted pickets were detailed from the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry for outposts on all the roads. Major Cook, with 200 men and officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, was charged with the duty of holding the Benton road and the fort.

Day after day the same round went on, the enemy making no move, but the vigilance of the union officers never relaxed.

The silence was ominous.

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CAPTAIN HOWARD COOK.

The subject of this sketch was born May 23, 1844, at Pleasant Grove, Lancaster County, Penn. He enlisted in Company "H," Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861, in which regiment he served until April 30, 1864, being successively promoted to the rank of Corporal and Sergeant for meritorious conduct in action. Always on the active list, he participated in all the battles and campaigns of this regiment, beginning at Fort Donelson and Shiloh, and ending with the capture of Vicksburg.

March 1, 1864, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and assigned to Company "I"; First Lieutenant, January 23, 1865, and assigned to Company "E," promoted to Captain of that Company, August 5, 1865. He led his company in the charge at Black River Bridge, November 27, 1864, where he was conspicuous at the point of greatest danger. His soldierly bearing, splendid horsemanship and pleasing personality marked him as an ideal cavalry officer. His whole military career was typical of the young officers who led the charging squadrons of this regiment. After the war he studied medicine, graduating at the University of Pennsylvania. Going west, he located at Edna, Kansas, where, country practice not being congenial to him, he moved to Trinidad, Colorado, and thence to Omaha, Nebraska, where he, after years of successful practice, died October 22, 1896.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE STORM BREAKS.

#### *The Bloody Fight of March 5, 1864.*

After the fight on the Benton road, February 28, the enemy maintained an ominous silence, not even a picket shot broke the monotony. But at daylight on the morning of March 5th, the storm broke in all its fury.

During the lull from March 1st, to the morning of the 5th, the enemy were largely reenforced by the arrival of General Richardson, with his brigade, consisting of the 14th, 15th, and 17th Tennessee regiments, and the 8th Louisiana, over 2,000 strong. Thus reinforced the combined forces of Ross and Richardson, numbering between 4,000 and 5,000 men, formed a cordon around the city during the night of March 4th, and at daylight on the morning of March 5th, they were hurled against the Union troops, numbering but 1,217 men and officers all told.

The rebel lines extended from a point above the city, on the Lexington road on the north, thence east, around to the Vicksburg road on the south. Out on the Lexington road, 1,500 yards northeast of the fort on the Benton road, was a redoubt occupy-



ing a commanding position, which was occupied by the enemy under General Richardson, where they planted a battery; on a hill just north of the Benton road, about 1,000 yards from the last named fort, the enemy planted several guns, and on a hill south of the Benton road 900 yards from the fort, the enemy planted another battery, and still further around to the south were two more redoubts within easy range of the Union position. Within the area embraced by these commanding positions, scattered through the gullies and ravines, safe from the shot and shell of their own artillery, were eight rebel regiments.

The gun-boats could render no assistance in this fight, as the city and the Union troops were between them and the enemy. The rebels opened the fight by first advancing on the Benton road, driving in the pickets of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. This picket consisted of one company, "B", commanded by Captain Emery, and was posted one mile from the fort, on the Benton road. The report of their carbines, volley after volley, as they met the attack, was the first sound to break the stillness of the early morning, denoting to the practiced ear that an attack in force was being made. Major Cook was at the fort, and hastened with a detachment of the regiment to support the picket, but the enemy came on with a rush that he could not check, and he was compelled to fall back and seek cover in the fort, first, however, making a stand in some rifle pits outside the fort, but the enemy's artillery making that position untenable, he withdrew his men to the inside. Major Cook had strengthened the fort a few days previous by placing some heavy plank on the parapet to serve as head barricades. These planks were taken from the Benton road, and placed one upon another, leaving a space beneath to fire through. This barricade proved a great protection to the men, shielding them from the rebel sharpshooters. Without this barricade Major Cook thinks the fort could not have held out.

While making the change from the rifle pits to the fort, Lieutenant Eugene Walker, Company C, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, was struck and instantly killed by a piece of shell, which exploded just outside the sally port, and which also killed and wounded several of the men. At this critical moment, the enemy

being about to storm the works, two companies of the Eleventh Illinois infantry, sent by Colonel Coates, entered the fort, coming up the hill on the double quick

These companies numbered in the aggregate about 80 men, and were commanded by their respective captains. This increased Major Cook's force to about 300 enlisted men, with which to contend against 2,500.

The enemies batteries, from their commanding positions on the adjacent hills, rained shot and shell into and around the besieged fort, some of the shot bursting in the air over the fort, the pieces falling among the men, killing and wounding many, and others finding lodgment in the earth-works, or ploughing deep furrows in the earth, covering the men with dirt and debris, while the rebel sharpshooters, crouching in gully and ravine, closed in around the besieged fort, in readiness for the final rush, which was to carry the fort by assault. Surely the little fort and its brave defenders seemed doomed. It was well known that the Texans took no "nigger" prisoners, therefore no quarter could be expected. Midst such scenes the stoutest heart might well quail. Thus the battle raged for several hours, the enemy all the time taking more advanced ground, when the firing ceased, and a flag of truce was seen approaching the fort. Major Cook sprang upon the parapet, where he was hailed by Colonel Mabry of the Third Texas Cavalry, bearing a message from General Ross, demanding the immediate and unconditional surrender of the forces holding the fort, to which demand Major Cook made this reply, "My compliments to General Ross, and say to him that if he wants this fort to come and take it." Colonel Mabry, bowing, returned to his command, and the firing was soon resumed. It may be stated here that General Ross accompanied his demand for the surrender of the fort with threats of dire consequences in case he was compelled to take the fort by assault. The men and officers were witnesses to the interview between Maj. Cook and the officer bearing the white flag and they were highly delighted at the conclusion.

After the flag of truce incident, the attack was renewed with even more fury than before; they pushed their lines closer and redoubled their fire, both with artillery and small arms. Lieu-

tenant Archibald Steward, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, fell mortally wounded, dying in a few minutes, and the men were falling on every side, killed or wounded. At this trying moment, Major McKee, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, reached the fort, having been sent by Colonel Coates, who was much concerned for the safety of those in it. Major McKee reached the fort through a deep ravine, flanking the Ninth Texas Cavalry, which regiment had gained a position west of the fort and between it and the city, and only about 100 yards from the fort. In reaching the fort Major McKee was often exposed to the fire of the enemy and that he was not shot was truly providential. Maj. McKee ranked Maj. Cook by seniority of commission, and he at once assumed command. It being feared that the 9th Texas, which had secured a strong position west of the fort, and quite close to it, might attempt a charge across the intervening space, Major McKee ordered companies A, and B, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, to take position outside the fort, in a deep ditch on the west side, bringing them face to face with the 9th Texas. These companies were commanded by Captain Emery and Lieutenant Calais, respectively. Major McKee accompanied these companies and remained with them, directing their movements. The enemy now formed a complete circle around the fort, ranging from 100 to 200 yards distant. They made repeated charges to carry the works by assault, but were as often beaten back, leaving the hill-side strewn with their dead and wounded. At intervals the enemy would cease firing and send out a flag of truce, demanding the surrender of the fort; see correspondence between Major McKee and General Ross.

The troops in the city, under Colonels Coates and Peebles, were savagely attacked by the forces of General Richardson, who entered the city from the north, on the Lexington road, and availing themselves of the protection of the buildings, fought their way from house to house until they reached a point near the river, where Colonel Coates had caused to be constructed a hastily improvised barricade of cotton bales, and where he had planted a howitzer he procured from one of the gun-boats. Here the enemy were brought to a stand, but they made repeated assaults, and the fighting became so fierce that the men in charge of the howitzer abandoned it and fled to the ship, but the officer of the

deck refused to let them come aboard. Another gun-squad, however, was quickly secured, who had pluck enough to stand by their gun. This second squad handled the gun with consummate skill and effectiveness throughout the remainder of the fight.

For a long time the issue trembled in the balance, it seeming that the Union soldiers must be overcome by sheer force of numbers, and it was only by their heroic bravery and bulldog tenacity that they maintained their ground. Communication between the Union forces in the city and those in the fort was now cut off, the fort being completely surrounded. The defeat of one meant the certain downfall of the other. Those in the city watched with bated breath the flag on the fort, for as long as it waved there was hope, and the officers commanding these respective positions, realizing the fact that defeat to one meant the utter destruction of the whole, fought on with a sublime courage that challenges comparison. And so the fight raged, the yells of the combatants, the groans of the wounded and the prayers of the dying being drowned in the general tumult. At a moment when it seemed that the Union troops must yield to the great preponderance of numbers, one of those lucky incidents occurred that sometimes turn the tide of battle. It was brought about by a bold dash made by Lieutenants Farley and Carson of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. Lieutenants Farley and Carson had been sent back to camp early that morning by Major Cook, to gather up all the men left in camp, and bring them to the fort, but on their return, they were cut off by the forces of General Richardson then entering the city. With the men they had gathered up, some 20 or 30, they fought their way back to the city, losing two men, killed by the enemy. Reaching the city, they put themselves at the command of Colonel Coates, doing gallant service. These officers, as before stated, leading such men as they could rally, made a bold dash that turned the enemy's left flank, which threw them into confusion. Sometimes it required but a trifle to start a panic, which once set in motion is as uncontrollable as a drove of Texas steers when stampeded. When the rebel line in the city broke, the 9th Texas, rebel, occupying a position west of the fort, seeing the stampede of their friends, and fearing that they too would be cut off, also broke in disorder. This being the regiment confronting Major McKee and the two companies of the Third U.

S. Colored Cavalry, that officer sallied forth with these companies, dashed down the hill, firing and yelling, which completed the rout of the 9th Texas, which degenerated into a mad scramble to seek shelter in gully and ravine. By these lucky and timely moves by the officers named, the combined forces of Ross and Richardson were defeated and put to flight. Thus the battle of Yazoo City was fought and won. The enemy was in retreat, leaving their dead and wounded where they fell.

The sun was disappearing below the western horizon when the firing ceased. The fight had raged with unceasing fury since daylight that morning, and the men, powder burnt, begrimed, and worn out, threw themselves on the ground and slept. The enemy went into camp a few miles from the city, from which point General Richardson, carried on a correspondence with Colonel Coates respecting the disposition of the rebel dead and wounded, which together with Colonel Coates' official reports of the fight, are herewith attached.

The losses of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry in the fight of March 5th and the skirmishes leading up to it were as follows:

Two commissioned officers killed, and three wounded; fifteen enlisted men killed, and twenty wounded; total casualties, 40.

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#### HOMeward BOUND.

On March 8th, in compliance with orders from the commanding general, the troops were embarked, and proceeded down the river. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was disembarked at Haynes Bluff, where they went into their old camp, the balance of the command continuing on to Vicksburg.

During this expedition, the regiment secured many recruits, nearly enough to complete its organization, and captured stock enough, horses and mules, to mount all the men. The conduct of the regiment on this expedition placed it on an equal footing with the best cavalry in the department.

The remains of Lieutenants Walter and Steward were brought back to Haynes Bluff, where they were placed in metallic cases and shipped to their friends in the north. In the death of these promising young officers, the regiment suffered an irreparable loss.

Unfortunately General Ross' first demand for the surrender of the fort on the Benton road, made early in the day of March 5th, was not made in writing, being delivered verbally by Colonel Mabry, of the Third Texas, and which is not mentioned in Colonel Coates' official report. This demand was made to Major Cook and before Major McKee assumed command.

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FIRST LIEUTENANT EDWIN FARLEY.

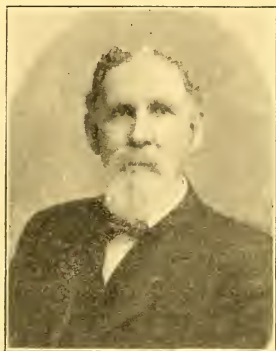
Lieutenant Farley was born in Walworth County, State of Wisconsin, August 28, 1842. He enlisted in Company K., Eighth Wisconsin Infantry, known as the "Eagle Regiment," August 26, 1861, being soon promoted to the rank of Corporal. He was with his regiment in the battle of Fredericktown, Mo., October 1861, in the battle of Island No. 10, the battle of Farmington, Miss., May 8, 1862, the siege of Corinth and the battle of Iuka, Miss. He was taken prisoner at the last named battle and sent to Vicksburg, where he was held until paroled and sent to St. Louis, Mo., to await exchange June 1st, following, when he rejoined his regiment at Union City, Tenn. He was with his regiment in all its battles and campaigns, including the battle of Richmond, La., Jackson and Raymond, Miss., and the charge on the works of Vicksburg, May 22, 1863.

He was detailed October 1863 as recruiting officer for the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry then being organized at Vicksburg.

He was discharged from the Eighth Wisconsin Infantry December 12, 1863 to accept promotion as Second Lieutenant in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and assigned to Company C, promoted to First Lieutenant January 23, 1865 for meritorious conduct in action, and assigned to Company B, assigned to Company I, August 8, 1865.

At the battle of Woodville, Miss., October 6, 1864, Lieutenant Farley led his company in a sabre charge, capturing Holmes' Louisiana Battery, three pieces. He was severely wounded while leading his company in a charge at the battle of Franklin, Miss., January 2, 1865. He was mustered out with the regiment January 26, 1866.

Resuming his place in the ranks of civil life, he continued to



ED. FARLEY.  
1st Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.





maintain that sturdy devotion to the principles of truth and good citizenship that always finds its reward in success and the good will of men.

Embarking in business in Paducah, Kentucky, soon after the war, he won a place among the substantial business men of that city, and where he has reared an interesting family. At the Kentucky State election, recently held, Lieutenant Farley was honored with the position of State Treasurer.

In the long list of volunteer soldiers who emerged from the ranks by sheer force of merit alone, winning a place in that splendid galaxy of the brightest types of the American volunteer soldier, the subject of this sketch furnishes a conspicuous example.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Correspondence between Brigadier General L. S. Ross, Commanding Texas Brigade, and Major George C. McKee, commanding Redoubt on Benton road, Yazoo City, March 5, 1864.

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*(First Demand Received by Major McKee.)*

"The first demand was for the unconditional surrender of my intrenchments and the forces under my command.

"The officer who brought the flag of truce (Lieutenant Rogers, of General Ross' staff) stated that he was also instructed to say to the commander of the redoubt, "that in case of having to storm the works, General Ross said he would be unable to restrain his men." I answered, "that means General Ross will murder the prisoners if he is successful." Lieutenant Rogers said, "No, not exactly that, but you know how it will be." I then refused to receive the communication and told Lieutenant Rogers to say to General Ross to put all of his communications into writing, for if he attacked me with the present understanding and was repulsed, I would kill every man that fell into my hands."

The above is appended to Colonel Coates' official report of the Yazoo expedition. (Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXVII, part 1, pp. 327-8.)

## (Second Demand.)

HEADQUARTERS ATTACKING FORCES,

Yazoo City, March 5, 1864.

MAJOR COMMANDING REDOUBT,

BENTON ROAD:

*Major*:—"An unconditional surrender of the forces holding the redoubt on Benton road, of Yazoo City, is demanded.

I have no terms to offer other than you shall receive the treatment due prisoners of war. A suspension of the firing on your position for ten minutes will be allowed in order that your answer may be received."

Respectfully, etc.,

L. S. ROSS,

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 328.) *Brigadier-General.*

(Answer.)

Yazoo City, March 5, 1864.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL ROSS:

*General*:—"Your demand for the surrender of my forces is received. In answer, I can only say that I have no idea of surrendering.

I am sorry that your threat in regard to the treatment of prisoners was not reduced to writing, as it certainly should have been."

Respectfully,

GEO. C. MCKEE,

*Major Eleventh Illinois Infantry,*(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 328.) *Commanding Redoubt*

(Third Demand.)

HEADQUARTERS FORCES ATTACKING YAZOO CITY.

Yazoo City, March 5, 1864.

*Major McKee*:—"Your reply just received. I regret for the sake of humanity that you do not find it consistent with your

feelings of duty to your Government to surrender the redoubt, which I can certainly storm and take.

As to the treatment of your men and yourself, I will try and have them protected if they surrender during the charge; but you must expect much bloodshed.

If you have no reply to make, we will resume operations when the white flag is down from both your line and mine."

Respectfully, etc.,

L. S. Ross,

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 328.) *Brigadier-General.*

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(*Answer.*)

"To this demand no written reply was made. The verbal statement sent to General Ross by Colonel Jones, Third (Ninth) Texas (bearer of flag) "That General Ross was a greater philanthropist than myself, and for him to take down his flag as soon as he reached his lines."

GEO. C. MCKEE,

*Major Eleventh Illinois Infantry.*

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 329.)

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(*Inclosure No. 4.*)

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY BRIGADE,

*Near Yazoo City, March 6, 1864.*

COLONEL COATES,

*Commanding U. S. Forces, Yazoo City, Miss.*

*Colonel:*—"Major James G. Thurman and Lieutenant Rainey and probably other officers and men of my command were killed yesterday in Yazoo City and not brought off the field. I send ambulance for the purpose of bringing to these headquarters their remains, which I request you to permit.

When I captured your wounded yesterday, in all about thirty in one house, I did not allow them to be molested, although I

could have brought some of them away with me. I hope you will treat my wounded that may have fallen into your hands with like humanity. I have about twenty of your men as prisoners, I would like to exchange for any of my men you may have, and suggest that a commission from each side could meet between our picket lines for the purpose.

If the proposition meets your approbation, you will indicate the time and place in reply to my officer bearing flag of truce.

I ask that one of my surgeons be allowed to visit my wounded men and officers in your possession to day and dress their wounds if necessary.

Captain W. E. Reneau, assistant inspector-general of my staff, with escort of men and ambulance train, will bear this communication under flag of truce."

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

R. V. RICHARDSON,

*Brigadier-General Commanding Brigade.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 329.)

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(*Inclosure No. 5.*)

HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES,

Yazoo City, Miss., March 6, 1864.

BRIGADIER-GEN. R. V. RICHARDSON,

*Commanding Cavalry Division,*

*Near Yazoo City,*

*Colonel:*—"Your communication this a. m. per flag of truce, just received and I hasten to reply.

I would respectfully state that your dead have been decently interred and your wounded properly cared for, and as there can be no necessity for your surgeon and ambulance corps, I decline receiving them.

As to the proposition of exchange, if I mistake not, a cartel has been agreed upon in which certain parties and places have been named for such exchange, and as neither General Richardson,

C. S. Army, nor Colonel Coates, U. S. Volunteers, have been named as the parties, nor Yazoo City the place for such exchange, I must respectfully decline your proposition.

I am, General,

Respectfully,

JAS. H. COATES,  
*Colonel Commanding U. S. Forces,  
Yazoo City, Miss.*

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 329.)

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Correspondence between General L. S. Ross, C. S. Army, commanding Texas Brigade and Colonel Jas. H. Coates, U. S. A., commanding Yazoo River Expedition.

HEADQUARTERS TEXAS BRIGADE,

JACKSON'S CAVALRY DIVISION,

March 4, 1864.

COLONEL COATES,

*Commanding U. S. Forces,*

*Yazoo City,*

*Sir:*—Some few weeks ago two men belonging to the Sixth Regiment Texas Cavalry were captured by one Colonel Wood, of the U. S. Army, near Mechanicsburg, Miss., and executed, without trial and in cold blood. From threats made by officers and men of your command during their recent raids through this country, I am led to infer that yourself and command indorse the cold-blooded and inhuman proceedings of Colonel Wood.

My object in addressing you now is to know whether or not such is the case. What kind of treatment shall members of this brigade expect, should the fortunes of war make them prisoners, in your hands?

Will they receive the treatment due prisoners of war, or be murdered as were the two unfortunate men above referred to?

Regard for the feelings of humanity and a strong desire to see the struggle in which we are engaged conducted as becometh

a civilized people are the motives which have prompted the above inquiries.

Up to the time of the death of the two men who were murdered by Colonel Wood, prisoners captured by this command were invariably treated kindly and with the consideration due them as prisoners of war; indeed, it is the boast of the 'Texans, that while they have always damaged the enemies of their country to the utmost of their ability on the battle-field and in open, fair fight, they have never yet injured nor in any way maltreated prisoners.

If, however, the sad fate that befell the two men captured at Mechanicsburg awaits all who may hereafter be taken we are prepared to accept the terms, and will know what course henceforth to pursue.

I trust your answer may be satisfactory to my command, and that there may be no necessity for any change in the treatment heretofore given to prisoners.

I am, Colonel,

Respectfully,

L. S. Ross,

*Brigadier-General*

*C. S. Army.*

(R. R. VOL. XXXIII, PART 1, P. 326.)

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HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES,

*Yazoo City, Miss., March 4, 1864*

BRIGADIER-GENERAL L. S. ROSS,

*Commanding Texas Brigade,*

*Jackson's Cavalry Division:*

*Sir:*—Your communication of date this a. m., per flag of truce, just received and contents noted. I would respectfully reply that your information relative to outrages said to have been committed by Colonel Wood, U. S. Volunteers, is the first intimation that I have received of such transaction, and beg further to assure you that this mode of warfare and treatment of prisoners is as sincerely deprecated by me as by yourself.

I desire, however, to call your attention (while speaking on this subject) to a fact which in all probability you have yet not been advised, viz, that in a skirmish with a portion of your command on the 28th ultimo, 19 of my command (colored) were missing; since then 6 of the number have been found, presenting every appearance of having been brutally used, and compelling me to arrive at the conclusion that they had been murdered after having been taken prisoners.

I beg leave to assure you that while I am desirous of performing all that is in my line of duty I will not deviate from those principles dictated by humanity, and it will only be in extreme cases of premeditated provocation that I will tolerate it in any portion of my command.

I am General,

Respectfully, etc.,

JAS. H. COATES,

*Colonel Commanding U. S. Forces, Yazoo City.*  
(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 327.)

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Reports of Colonel James H. Coates, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, commanding Yazoo Expedition.

HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES, YAZOO RIVER,

*On Board Steamer Des Moines,*

February 3, 1864.

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to report that my command encountered the enemy to-day in considerable force, variously estimated at from 2,300 to 2,500, under command of Brigadier-General Ross, and his troops were composed of Arkansas and Texas men and veterans in the Confederate service.

We have been following them closely and carefully for the past two days and this morning they opened fire upon one of our gun-boats with two pieces of field artillery without, however, doing any damage to the boats.

I at once disembarked about 250 of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, under command of Maj. George C. McKee, Eleventh

Illinois Infantry. He was not long in coming upon the enemy, and at once engaged him with his line of skirmishers. The hills in this vicinity (between Sartatia and Liverpool) are almost mountainous and difficult of assault, yet our skirmishers steadily advanced and drove them from their first position. They rallied, however, but not until I had thrown out to the right of his (McKee's) line one wing of the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Peebles, Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent.

I now, finding both detachments closely pressed, ordered the balance of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, consisting of about 300 men, under command of Capt. H. C. Vore, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, to their support, throwing the latter as a reserve and in the rear of about the center of the line of skirmishers.

The enemy now opened briskly with two pieces of artillery (apparently 12 pounders) also infantry fire. He at this time attempted to flank us on our right, but I met his movements by ordering out the balance of my force, the remaining battalion of the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, under command of Captain Wilson, Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent. Major McKee at this time gallantly charged their line and was repulsed with a loss of two killed and 5 wounded.

The enemy then charged on that part of the line commanded by Capt. H. C. Vore, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, but was nobly repulsed without any loss to our side, and were fairly driven beyond the hill, the possession of which we were contending for. Both detachments of the Eighth Louisiana, African descent, nobly performed their part of the duty assigned them and acquitted themselves most handsomely, displaying the courage, coolness and discipline of the most experienced troops. I would respectfully state that I was materially assisted in the day's operation by a detachment of 35 men of the First Mississippi Cavalry, under command of Major Cook, First Mississippi Cavalry, who I took on board at Haynes Bluff to accompany me on the expedition for recruiting purposes for the benefit of that regiment, and who have proved of incalculable benefit to me as scouts, etc. As night approached I gave the signal for the detachment to fall back to the boats, the gun-boats covering this movement with well-directed shell. I am now dropping down the river, where I shall go for



about one mile, and will make another attack on the enemy at daylight to-morrow morning.

I have the honor to report my available strength as follows:

Eleventh Illinois Infantry, 560. Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, 387. First Mississippi Cavalry, African descent, 35.

I have the honor also to report the casualties of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry killed 4, wounded 12, missing 8. Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, killed 2, Second Lieutenant Welch and 7 privates wounded (some mortally), First Mississippi Cavalry, African descent, wounded, one (slightly).

Respectfully

JAS. H. COATES,

*Colonel 11th Ill. Inf. and Commanding  
Land Forces, Yazoo Expedition.*

LIEUTENANT-COL. W. T. CLARK,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 315-317.)

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HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES,

ON BOARD STEAMER DES MOINES.

*Yazoo River, Near Satartia, February 6, 1864.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to respectfully continue my report of the movements of this expedition to this date.

On the morning of the 4th instant at 4:30 o'clock, I left our landing near Satartia and proceeded without interruption up the Yazoo until, when opposite the bluffs where we had engaged the enemy the day before, the enemy opened a heavy fire upon the transports (having permitted the advance gun-boats to pass unmolested) which was returned briskly and I think effectually by my men from behind hastily constructed barricades composed of knapsacks, boxes of hard bread, etc. The loss to our side from the fire is as follows, viz.:

Steamer Des Moines, right wing, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, 1 man wounded severely in ankle; Sioux City, left wing, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, 3 men wounded severely; Steamer J. H. Lacey,

right wing, Eighth Louisiana Infantry, 1 man mortally wounded.

The rear gun-boat opened with well directed shell against the enemy, which dispersed them before the transports could be landed.

We then passed on up the river, arriving in the afternoon at Goosey's Mill, about 4 miles below Yazoo City, having in the transit stopped at several plantations and secured about 200 bales of cotton, which, as received on boats, were constructed into barricades and used for protection to boilers.

We also secured at a deserted plantation 9 head of beef-cattle and 12 head of mules. At 9:30 p. m. the steamer Hastings made her appearance with clearances, passes, etc. from the Treasury Department, and is now consequently attached to our fleet. She had also been fired into at the same point our transports were (near Liverpool) and the watchman of the boat seriously wounded.

I remained at Goosey's Mill during the day of February 5th, and about 11 a. m. the steamer Emma Boyd arrived, and reported as dispatch-boat, for the gun-boat fleet. The gun-boats having been ordered to approach Yazoo City for the purpose of reconnoitering, found the enemy at that point in force; discovered also five guns in position and one other in course of erection. The guns in position opened fire, two of the shots taking effect on one of the gun-boats. After dropping back and making more careful observations, they returned to their anchorage at Goosey's Mill. Taking as a basis the above expressed observations of the gun-boats and information gathered from other sources, I was satisfied that a much larger force was in position there than was anticipated and fearing they might plant a battery in my rear at Liverpool (the best point on the river for the erection of a battery) I ordered a return of the fleet to our present position, which we reached at an early hour this morning, not, however, without being fired on with musketry at Liverpool, without in any manner damaging us.

I would further respectfully state that the Emma Boyd was ordered by the naval officer to report to Vicksburg, Miss., with dispatches, and having a messenger on board destined for General Sherman, I took the liberty of making to him a full report of the operations and prospects of the expedition.

I have ordered that at daylight to-morrow morning (7th

instant) two gun-boats shall proceed up the river as far as they can possibly reach, and in the meantime I propose sending a force of infantry, with such cavalry as I have, to engage the enemy at Liverpool, it being represented that the force there consists of the Sixth Texas Rangers and half of some other Texas regiment.

Respectfully,

JAS. H. COATES,

*Colonel Eleventh Illinois Infantry*

*Commanding Land Forces,*

*Yazoo River Expedition.*

LIEUT. COL. W. T. CLARK,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

The steamer Hastings leaves here to-morrow on business connected with the Treasury Department, and on her I send my wounded to Vicksburg.

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 317-18.)

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HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES,

ON STEAMER DES MOINES.

*One Mile Below Yazoo City, February 8, 1864.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to respectfully forward report of proceedings of Yazoo River expedition from last report to present date.

When last reporting I occupied the position at Goosey's Mill until the morning of the 7th instant. We dropped down the river to a short distance below Satartia. As the enemy were observed on the bluffs near the town, I disembarked my whole force and deployed the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, as skirmishers. The Eleventh Illinois Infantry formed in division as reserve, and gradually engaged the enemy, he rallying and moving by the left flank and toward their main body near Liverpool. At 5:30 o'clock I signaled my force to fall back to the transports, and after securing myself against surprise and stationing a strong picket remained for the night. The following morning (February 8) at the suggestion of Captain Owen, commanding

gun-boat fleet, I awaited the appearance of the gun-boat Louisville, which was hourly expected, and not making her appearance at my hour fixed for starting, about noon I left Satartia and proceeded up the river, and was fully prepared and expected to meet with an engagement at Liverpool, but was surprised not to find any of the enemy at that point. Arriving at Goosey's Mill, 4 miles below Yazoo City, I signaled the boats to proceed up the river, preceded by two of the gun-boats, the two gun-boats passing the city and the transports landing within a mile of the city. In the meantime, when at Goosey's Mill, I dispatched a small but effective force of the First Mississippi Cavalry, African descent, Major Cook commanding, and ordered them to proceed up the west bank of the river until opposite the city. Arriving at a point opposite the city, he encountered a small force of the enemy, and after a slight skirmish succeeded in capturing two men and four horses. The enemy have moved south on the Bolton road and toward the Vicksburg and Jackson road.

Respectfully,

JAS. H. COATES,

*Commanding Yazoo River Expedition.*

LIEUTENANT-COL. W. T. CLARK,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 318-19.)

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HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES,

*Yazoo City, Miss., March 2, 1864.*

*General:*—I have the honor of communicating with you 28th ultimo, since which time I have been in occupation of this city; not, however, without some little difficulties, as I am almost constantly engaged in skirmishing with the enemy. He comes up and drives my pickets in. I then run him off completely. This occurs two or three times per day. It keeps us watchful, but I am under no apprehension at all, for I can hold this place, without doubt, against five times my numbers. The defenses are strong, and the approaches to them difficult. I was pleased to-day at receiving a communication from Colonel Crandal, dated at Satartia, and saying he was moving for Liverpool. This is just

what is wanted if we are to hold this point. I have information that a portion of the force (rebel) here has gone to Liverpool, as I supposed they would.

The force opposing me is Ross' brigade of about 1,400 men, and are encamped at 2 miles beyond Benton, 12 miles from here. They will be re-enforced, I am reliably informed, by Jackson's command, some 5,000 men, but whether for an attack upon me or not I am not prepared to say. I have this intelligence from an employe of mine, who has been with them for two days and returned today.

Since hearing from Colonel Crandal I have concluded to send the fleet forward all except the Sir William Wallace, which I desire to keep here for foraging and other purposes for the benefit of the Government.

The cotton I wrote you as being claimed by Forsyth I have given permission to ship to you and have you decide the legality of the purchase.

I have my tents pitched, camps established, and everything looks cheering, with enough fighting to create a healthy circulation of the blood.

Colonel Osband goes forward for his camp equipage, arms, etc., and will return in a few days. He has been eminently successful in recruiting, having his regiment nearly full and a mule or a horse for every recruit.

Accompanying please find manifest of cargoes of boats and a statement of that which is on the gun-boats, but the latter of which I am not personally accountable for, as they claim to be a separate institution, and though it was difficult to convince me of the fact, yet, as advised by General Sherman, I did not dispute the point of rank.

Respectfully,

JAS. H. COATES,

*Colonel Eleventh Illinois Infantry,*

*Commanding Expedition.*

BRIGADIER-GENERAL MCARTHUR,

*Commanding Post and Defenses, Vicksburg, Miss.*

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 320.)

## HEADQUARTERS ELEVENTH ILLINOIS INFANTRY.

*Vicksburg, Miss., March 11, 1864.*

*Sir:* I have the honor herewith to present you the following report of Yazoo River expedition, of which I had the honor of commanding:

Pursuant to orders from Seventeenth Army Corps headquarters, and special instructions from Major-General Sherman, I embarked my command on the 31st of January last, consisting of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, Maj. George C. McKee commanding (numbering 21 commissioned officers and 539 enlisted men), and Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, Lieutenant-Colonel F. E. Peebles commanding (numbering 17 commissioned officers and 370 enlisted men), on board the transports assigned for the purpose, and disposing of them to the best advantage, and convoyed by five gun-boats, under command of Captain Owen, moved up the river, arriving the same night at the mouth of the Yazoo river, where we remained during the night, taking on sufficient fuel to last two weeks.

On the morning of the 1st of February, I moved up the Yazoo river, arriving at Haynes Bluff the same evening, taking on a small detachment of the First Mississippi Cavalry, African descent, under command of Major Cook.

On the following morning I moved up the river without interruption until within a mile of Satartia, where the enemy were reported to be, when I disembarked Major McKee with the left wing of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, and Major Cook with his small detachment of cavalry, with orders to move through the town and toward the bluffs. But few of the enemy's pickets were seen, who fled at our approach.

I embarked my men again at Satartia, and on the following morning (February 3), moved up the river to within 2 miles of Liverpool Heights, when the enemy opened on my advance with two pieces of artillery. I immediately moved my transports down out of range and disembarked the troops and made preparations to engage him, having ascertained the force to be Brigadier-General Ross' Texas brigade and numbering about 1,400 men. I ordered Major McKee with the left wing of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry to move upon the extreme left with

skirmishers advanced, the right wing of the Eleventh in the center moving in the same manner, and the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, on the right and left center, to move forward with the Eleventh. We were soon warmly engaged, the enemy falling back to a hastily constructed breast-work of logs, etc., where they made a desperate stand.

At this juncture Major McKee ordered a charge with the right wing only of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry (the left wing being engaged with the enemy's skirmishers), but the enemy being in far superior numbers and having advantage of position, he was obliged to fall back to his former position under cover of a hill; not, however, without punishing the enemy severely, as could be seen by the removal of their wounded. The Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, in the mean time had moved to the right and had engaged the enemy on the flank, but were compelled by superior numbers to fall back to their original position, being still at close range. Heavy skirmishing now began between my force and the enemy, which continued until nearly sunset, when I gave the signal, and the entire command moved back to their respective boats in good order, removing our wounded with them.

From observations I had made I was led to believe that the enemy expected me to renew the attack the following morning, and was more fully and better prepared to meet me, and knowing their superiority of numbers and large advantage of position, and with two pieces of artillery, and as they were out of range of the gun-boats, I concluded it to be a better policy to move up the river, in order to keep them near me, as was designed by Major-General Sherman.

On the morning of the 4th, I again moved up the river, and, when nearly opposite the point where we had the engagement the day before, the enemy opened a brisk fire of musketry on the transports, permitting the advance gun-boats to pass unmolested. My men immediately formed temporary breast-works of boxes of hard bread, knapsacks, etc., and returned the fire with good effect.

Five of my men were wounded in this affair, the names, etc., of which please find inclosed.

From this point I proceeded up the river without interrup-

tion within 6 miles of Yazoo City, where I remained during the following day, when I suggested to Captain Owen, commanding gun-boat squadron, to move two of his boats to Yazoo City to reconnoitre, which was accordingly done. They returned in a few hours, reporting the enemy in heavy force in that place, and were fired upon with artillery, two shots taking effect in one of the boats; also reporting five guns in position and one in course of erection.

I have since learned that but two pieces of artillery were there, and but a small force of infantry.

Fearing a night attack, I moved down the river again nearly to Liverpool, where I remained until the following morning, when I learned from good authority that the main body of the enemy had left for Benton. I then moved a short distance up the river, when I observed men moving on the bluffs in the vicinity.

I immediately disembarked a sufficient force, moving forward a line of skirmishers (with reserves at a proper distance), until we had full possession of the heights, exchanging but few shots, the enemy retreating on their horses back toward the interior. Fearing the small force I had disembarked would move too far from the boats, I ordered the proper signal to be given to return to the transports.

The following morning I moved up the river without interruption, and on the morning of the 9th of February took possession of Yazoo City.

I had disembarked my small force of cavalry on the west side of the river with orders to move up to a point immediately opposite the city. They succeeded in capturing a small body of pickets, which had been left by the enemy, and which were duly forwarded to General McArthur by the next boat.

The following day (February 10), Col. E. D. Osband arrived from Haynes Bluff with the balance of his regiment of cavalry, making a very effective force of about 250 men. At daylight of the morning of the 11th of February, I moved up the river, arriving without interruption from the enemy until on the 13th of February, when near the head of Honey Island, about 60 confederate soldiers were observed ahead and on the right bank of the river. I immediately ordered Colonel Osband



to disembark with his command and engage them, moving my transports at the same time at supporting distance and my men ready to disembark immediately.

The enemy fled back from the river, closely followed by Colonel Osband, who skirmished with them as long as he considered it prudent to do so, when he returned to the boats, having had 3 men wounded and losing a few horses killed, but had used the enemy severely and succeeded in capturing 3 prisoners.

I moved from this point and arrived at Greenwood, Miss., at 9 p. m. on the 14th of February, having moved with great caution as far as Fort Pemberton, but found it evacuated.

On the morning of the 16th of February, I ordered Colonel Osband with his regiment of cavalry to proceed to Grenada, unless he found the enemy in too strong force. He returned the following day and reported having been within 5 miles of Grenada, and had learned that it was occupied by General Forest with his command, but who was reported as moving out from that place.

I remained at Greenwood until the morning of February 19th, securing as much cotton, etc., as possible during the time, when I received orders from Brigadier-General McArthur, commanding at Vicksburg, to return to Yazoo City and hold that position until further orders, (please find a copy of order inclosed).

I immediately moved down the river, taking cotton, corn, etc., when found on plantations of disloyal parties, making my descent necessarily slow, (report of cotton, stock, etc., please find inclosed), I arrived, however, without interruption further than the tearing off the upper works of the transports by overhanging trees to within 6 miles of Yazoo City, Sunday, February 28th, where I disembarked my whole force of cavalry, with instructions to move in rear of Yazoo City and take possession of all the roads leading therefrom. I then moved down leisurely with the gun-boats and transports (giving the cavalry ample time to secure all the outlets from the city) and commenced disembarking my infantry. Before, however, I had my force moved from the boats, I received information that the enemy had attacked my cavalry picket force. I immediately ordered Major

Cook, First Mississippi Cavalry, African descent, with a detachment of his command to move out on the Benton road and reconnoiter. I then disembarked my infantry and formed in line, moving the Eleventh Regiment double-quick to the works commanding the Benton road and the Eighth Louisiana, African descent, to the ridge road on the right and commanding the bluff and stationed two companies of cavalry on the extreme left.

About 3 p. m. Major Cook returned, followed closely by a much superior force of the enemy until within range of my line of skirmishers, who drove them back and skirmished with them nearly 3 miles.

Major Cook reported having run in General Ross' entire command about 6 miles out from the city, and who were evidently endeavoring to gain possession of the works on the heights before our arrival.

The loss in this affair to the cavalry was rather heavy, considering the numbers engaged. I ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Peebles and Major McKee to hold the positions they then occupied, the men of their command to lie on their arms and ready for any emergency. The enemy, however, made no attack in force, but annoyed our picket line continuously. About noon on the 29th of February, my camp and garrison equipage arrived, and I ordered the commandants of each regiment to select a suitable camp-ground as near their positions as possible, which was accordingly done, and on the 1st instant we were in very comfortable quarters.

The enemy would every day make a dash on my advance picket-posts and vedettes, but would retire upon any demonstration being made by the reserves, and being well mounted, could not be overtaken.

Upon the night of 4th instant, I ascertained that General Ross had been reenforced by the command of Brigadier-General Richardson (reported to have 800 Tennessee troops.) I gave orders to have my picket reserves strengthened by two companies of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry and two companies of the Eighth Louisiana African descent.

Upon the morning of Saturday, 5th instant, a heavy attack was made on my center picket (Benton road) but they stood their ground manfully, and not until the enemy had opened a heavy

artillery fire upon the picket and reserves did they fall back to the main body of the regiment.

The engagement had now become extended throughout my entire line.

I had instructed Lieutenant-Colonel Peebles and Major McKee to hold their positions at all hazards, as their redoubts commanded the entire city, and as long as they were held we had the town in our possession.

About 10 o'clock a. m. I discovered a movement on the part of the enemy to flank me on the left, where I posted a small detachment of the First Mississippi Cavalry. I at once ordered four companies of the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, stationed over a mile distant, to their support. They came gallantly forward double-quick, but before they arrived within supporting distance General Richardson's entire command had entered the city proper, two regiments being between my headquarters and Fort McKee.

At this time Major McKee had sent out a portion of company K, Eleventh Regiment, to open communication to my headquarters, but finding the enemy in too strong force they endeavored to move back to the works, and in doing so the enemy succeeded in capturing 10 of them prisoners. Three of them, however, escaped into the city, informing me that my only piece of artillery (a small howitzer borrowed from the gun-boat Exchange, and which was posted in the redoubt occupied by Major McKee) had become disabled. I immediately sent for another of the same kind, but before I could get it in the redoubt the enemy had gained full possession of the street, and I posted it upon the corners of the principal streets of the city and behind a hastily constructed breast-work of cotton, and I regret to say at the first fire of the enemy the officer in charge of the gun (Ensign Holmes, U. S. Navy) and his men shamefully deserted it and fled to the boat, but were met by captain McElroy, commanding gun-boat, who refused them permission to come on board the boat.

I succeeded, however, in moving the gun from its position, and procured another squad to man it, and who performed their duty faithfully and with great bravery. The enemy at this time began to crowd my small force, and I ordered two more com-

panies from the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, who responded with alacrity. I now distributed my small force, consisting of Company A, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, and six companies of the Eighth Louisiana Infantry, through the streets, in doorways, houses, etc., and commenced a vigorous and telling fire upon the enemy, the howitzer discharging shell with telling effect into the houses the enemy had taken possession of. During this time the enemy were pouring a heavy discharge of shot and shell from six pieces of artillery, doing little damage, however, except to the buildings.

In the meantime Major McKee in his redoubt, with nine companies of the Eleventh and Major Cook with his small detachment of 80 men in the rifle-pits (the rifle-pits having been constructed the day before), and Lieutenant-Colonel Peebles, with his four companies on the right, were doing nobly.

Major McKee was for four hours surrounded on three sides by the enemy with six regiments, and three times was he ordered to surrender (orders to surrender and reply of major please find inclosed).

During the whole time the enemy had gained his position so as to strike the fort. He had kept up a continuous fire of artillery and small arms, in which our loss was very severe.

About 2 p. m. my force made a desperate charge through the streets, completely routing the enemy and pursuing them entirely through the town and beyond the breast-works in the left, my single piece of artillery doing fine execution. The force around and engaged with Major McKee, perceiving their right falling back in disorder, fell into confusion and began to retreat in great disorder, and the major, with only six men, sallied from the fort and with loud cheers actually turned the flank of one entire regiment.

The enemy now fell back out of range, and his losses must have been very severe, they admitting the loss of over 40 killed, and their ambulances could be seen constantly employed.

My casualties of this and previous engagements during the expedition please find inclosed.\*

Before the engagement of the 5th instant, I had received a communication from General Ross, of which please find copies with answer inclosed; also copy of communication from General



CAPT. GEO. C. STARR.  
Third U. S. C. C.



Richardson, received immediately after the engagement, and answer inclosed.

\*Nominal list (omitted) shows 31 killed, 121 wounded, and 31 missing.

I cannot close this report without expressing my heartfelt thanks and unbounded admiration for the very able support afforded me by the brave Maj. George C. McKee and the officers and men of his command; to Maj. J. B. Cook, First Mississippi Cavalry, African descent, and the officers and men of his command; to Lieut. Col. F. E. Peebles, Eighth Louisiana Infantry, African descent, and officers and men composing his command, and would respectfully call your attention to the bravery, coolness and ability of these officers.

To Capt. N. C. Kenyon, Company K; Adj. H. H. Deane, Lieut. J. W. Brewster, acting regimental quartermaster; Lieut. Charles A. Pieronnet, Company E, all of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, I am under particular obligations. They formed my staff, and acted with all the energy, bravery, coolness, and determined perseverance in the discharge of their arduous duties as they ever have been noted for.

To Lieut. Orton Ingersoll, Company A, Eleventh Regiment, and the brave men of his command (who were detailed for provost guard, and for a long time during the engagement were the only company in the streets of the city), I desire to bespeak your most considerate attention. During the advance of the enemy into the city, this company held greatly superior numbers in check and disputed every inch of ground.

I neglected to report in the proper place, that at about 11 a. m. on the 5th instant, when I found my position somewhat closely pressed, I dispatched the transport Sir William Wallace to Liverpool (24 miles) to bring the command (or as much as could be spared) of Colonel Crandal, Tenth Louisiana, African descent, stationed at that point, but for some cause they did not arrive at Yazoo City until the fight was over.

Upon Sunday evening, 6th instant, the transports South Western, Mars, and Emerald arrived, bringing orders from headquarters Seventeenth Army Corps to embark all the force, stores, etc., and again disembark the force at Liverpool. Marching from thence, and leaving the troops belonging at Haynes Bluff at that point, and bringing those belonging to Vicksburg to that station,

all of which, I have the honor to report, was accomplished without opposition from the enemy.

I have the honor herewith to inclose a rough sketch of \*Yazoo City and its surrounding, with the position of troops, etc.

I have the honor, colonel, to remain, respectfully,

JAS. H. COATES,  
*Col. 11th Illinois Inf. Vols.,*  
*Commanding Yazoo River Expedition.*

LIEUT. COL. W. T. CLARK,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

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(Indorsements.)

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE.

*Huntsville, April 2, 1864.*

Respectfully forwarded to headquarters Military Division, and special attention called to the gallantry and bravery of Colonel Coates, Major McKee, and the officers and soldiers under them.

JAS. B. McPHERSON,  
*Major-General Commanding.*

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HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIV. OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

*Nashville, Tenn., April 16, 1864.*

Recorded and respectfully forwarded for the information of the War Department.

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Major-General, Commanding.*  
 (R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 320 to 326.)

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FIRST LIEUTENANT JAMES S. MATTHEWS.

The subject of this sketch was born in Morris county, State of New Jersey, November 18, 1845. At the breaking out of the war he was living in Joliet, Ill., where he enlisted, October 9, 1861, in Company C, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, being then scarcely sixteen years of age. Going to the front with his regiment, he was active in the battle of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, doing





JAS. S. MATTHEWS,  
1st Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.



duty as orderly for General John A. McClernard. At the battle of Shiloh, he was orderly for General W. H. L. Wallace, and was later orderly at General John A. Logan's headquarters during that general's occupation of Jackson, Tenn., in 1862.

He was with his company in the forward movement of the army under General Grant, in the fall and winter of 1862, participating in all the battles and skirmishes of that eventful campaign, which closed with the defeat of the Union Cavalry at Coffeville, Miss. In the last named engagement his horse was shot and killed under him, and he narrowly escaped capture.

On January 27, 1863, while on a scout with his company, under Lieutenant J. E. Hitt, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, a few miles from Colliersville, Tenn., the command was attacked by an overpowering force of rebel cavalry, and in the fight that ensued, two men of his company were killed and seven wounded, and all taken prisoners except young Mathews and another man, who made their escape by dashing through the enemy's ranks, being hotly pursued for a long distance.

He was promoted to the rank of Corporal, July 1, 1863, for meritorious conduct in action. He was mustered out of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, October 9, 1863, to accept promotion as Second Lieutenant in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and assigned to Company A. On receipt of his commission, Lieutenant Mathews was detailed as recruiting officer and instructor for the new recruits of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. He was promoted to First Lieutenant, August 26, 1865, which position he held until the regiment was mustered out of the service, January 26, 1866.

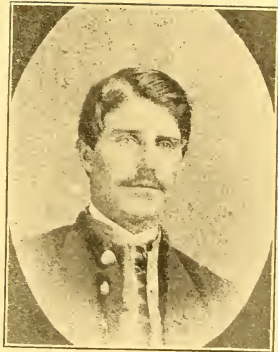
To follow this officer in detail through all the battles, campaigns and skirmishes he took part in would fill a volume and read like a romance.

One of the first officers commissioned in the regiment, assisting in recruiting and drilling the first company, with them in every battle and campaign, conspicuous in every engagement, standing with them in the deadly breach, keeping vigil with them on the lonely picket post, bivouacing with them in sunshine and in rain, and one of the last to see the regiment disbanded at the close of the war, the record of Lieutenant Mathews connection with the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry is closely interwoven with the history of the regiment.

## CHAPTER X.

ROSTER OF THE COMMISSIONED AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF THE THIRD U. S. COLORED  
CAVALRY, SHOWING RANK AND SERVICE IN FORMER REGIMENT.

NAME AND RANK.	REMARKS.	FORMER REGIMENT.
<i>Colonel</i> — EMBURY D. OSBAND-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Brevet Brigadier-General, October 5, 1864. Resigned June 24, 1865. Died October 4, 1866.	First Lieutenant Barker's Chicago Dragoons, April, 1861. Captain Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
<i>Lieutenant-Colonel</i> — J. B. COOK-----	Promoted from Major, November 27, 1864. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant and Second Lieutenant, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
<i>Majors</i> — CHARLES H. CHAPIN-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Barker's Chicago Dragoons, April, 1861. Sergeant, Lieutenant and Captain, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
ED. M. MAIN-----	Commissioned October 15, 1863. Mustered out with regiment. Wounded in action.	Barker's Chicago Dragoons, April, 1861. Sergeant and First Lieutenant, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863. Wounded in action.



CAPT. W. W. WEBBER,

Third U. S. C. C.



*First Lieutenant and Adjutant—*  
FRANK E. LOVEJOY-----

Commissioned October, 1863. Resigned  
November 12, 1864, by reason of ill  
health. Deceased.

C. N. WILSON-----

Commissioned November, 1864. Mustered  
out with regiment.

*First Lieutenant and Quartermaster—*  
S. V. W. WHITING-----

Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out  
with regiment.

*First Lieutenant and Commissary—*  
P. WOLFERSBERGER-----

Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out  
with regiment.

*Major and Surgeon—*  
WILLIAM T. BEADLES-----

Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out  
with regiment.

*First Lieut. and Ass't Surgeon—*  
PRICE KEITH-----

Commissioned October, 1863. Resigned—  
\_\_\_\_\_. Deceased.

Z. D. FRENCH-----

Promoted from Hospital Steward. Mustered  
out with regiment.

*Hospital Steward—*  
CHARLES SMITH-----

Died at Vicksburg.

Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Clerk at General  
Grant's Headquarters.

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Fourth Illinois Cavalry. Clerk company A.

Commissary Sergeant, company D, Fourth  
Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to Oc-  
tober, 1863.

Assistant Surgeon, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

Eighth Wisconsin Infantry.

ROSTER—CONTINUED.

NAME AND RANK.	REMARKS.	FORMER REGIMENT.
<i>Chief Bugler—</i>		
V. H. BEHR-----	Mustered out with regiment.	Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
<i>Captains—</i>		
W. W. WEBER-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant and Second Lieutenant, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863. Wounded in action.
ANDREW EMERY -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Lockport Light Artillery, April 1861. Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
BENJ. S. WING-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Barker's Chicago Dragoons, April, 1861. Sergeant company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
GEORGE C. STARR-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Killed in action, May 13, 1864.	Sergeant company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
F. A. COOK-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Wounded in action February 28, 1864. Resigned March 8, 1865. Deceased.	Sergeant company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
C. C. SPAIDS -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Resigned December 31, 1864.	Second Lieutenant, company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry September, 1861 to October, 1863.

*Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*



*Captains—Continued—*

GEORGE COYKENDALL -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
JESSE BRAINARD -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Wounded in action December 13, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
HARRISON WHITE -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
A. J. HAYNES -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment. Deceased.	Sergeant company C, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
HENRY FRETZ -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment. Deceased.	Sergeant company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
WILLIAM HYLAND -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment. Deceased.	Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
RANDOLPH GRIMES -----	Promoted from First Lieutenant. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
RICHARD TAYLOR -----	Promoted from First Lieutenant. Wounded in action December 13, 1863. Resigned January 7, 1865.	Sergeant 55th Illinois Infantry. Wounded in action.
HOWARD COOK -----	Promoted from First Lieutenant, August, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
THOMAS C. EDLAND -----	Promoted from First Lieutenant. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant Eleventh Illinois Infantry.

## ROSTER—CONTINUED.

NAME AND RANK.	REMARKS.	FORMER REGIMENT.
<i>First Lieutenants—</i> FRANK W. CALAIS -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Resigned May 26, 1865.	Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Septem- ber, 1861 to October, 1863.
JAMES S. MATTHEWS-----	Promoted from Second Lieutenant, August, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.	Corporal Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Septem- ber, 1861 to October, 1863.
GEORGE F. WARREN-----	Resigned May 22, 1864.	Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
W. B. LARRAPEE -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
E. L. EGGLESTON -----	Resigned February 18, 1865.	Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
MARSHALL H. MOON -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Resigned April 13, 1864, by reason of wounds re- ceived in action December 13, 1863.	Sergeant Company B, Fourth Illinois Cav- alry, September, 1861 to October, 1863, Wounded in action.
CHARLES M. PARKS-----	Commissioned October, 1863. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
JOHN FREEBORN -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Died at Vicksburg, December 11, 1864.	Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
EDWIN FARLEY -----	Promoted from Second Lieutenant, January 26, 1865. Mustered out with regiment. Wounded in action January 2, 1865.	Sergeant Eighth Wisconsin Infantry.

S. H. PETTENGILL -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant, August 21, 1864. Killed in action January 2, 1865.

Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

D. E. POTTER -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant, August 21, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.

Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry. Captain 55th U. S. C. Infantry.

JOHN SHOTZELL -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant. Resigned.

Sergeant company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.

E. C. MCKUBBEN -----

Resigned October 22, 1864.

Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

FREDERICK FERNALD -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant March 2, 1865. Mustered out with regiment. Deceased.

Sergeant Eighth Wisconsin Infantry.

JOSEPH RANDALL -----

Resigned December 3, 1864. Deceased.

Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

JASPER JENNINGS -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant January 25, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.

Sergeant Company B, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.

A. S. HENDERSON -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant September 19, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.

Eighth Wisconsin Infantry.

JOSEPH CARTER -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant August 20, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.

Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

A. H. CARSON -----

Promoted from Second Lieutenant January 25, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.

124th Illinois Infantry.

## ROSTER—CONTINUED.

NAME AND RANK.	REMARKS.	FORMER REGIMENT.
<i>First Lieutenants—Continued—</i> I. H. GRISWOLD -----	Promoted from Second Lieutenant August 20, 1865. Mustered out with regiment.	Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry, September, 1861 to October, 1863.
<i>Second Lieutenants—</i> EUGENE WALTER -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Killed in action at Yazoo City, March 5, 1864.	Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Company A.
ARCHIBALD STEWART -----	Commissioned October, 1863. Killed in action at Yazoo City, March 1, 1864.	Sergeant Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
LELAND HALL -----	Resigned November 3, 1864, by reason of wounds received in action, December 13, 1863.	Fourth Illinois Cavalry.
LORENZO HAYNES -----	Promoted from First Sergeant. Mustered out with regiment.	-----
F. M. CROSBY -----	Promoted from First Sergeant. Mustered out with regiment.	-----
I. B. WILLIS -----	Promoted from First Sergeant. Mustered out with regiment.	72d Illinois Infantry.
BYRON LOWELL -----	Mustered out with regiment.	First Maine Cavalry.
J. J. PUTNEY -----	Promoted from First Sergeant. Mustered out with regiment.	Eighth Wisconsin Infantry.

*Second Lieutenants—Continued—*

Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

Mustered out with regiment.

JOHN SHERMAN -----

Eighth Wisconsin Infantry.

Promoted from Sergeant-Major. Mustered out with regiment.

W. W. GERRY -----

Third New York Cavalry.

Mustered out with regiment.

W. H. CHAPIN -----

124th Illinois Infantry.

Transferred to the regiment for promotion. Killed in action, July 5, 1864.

*Sergeants (White)—*  
JOSEPH SHEDWICK -----

Corporal 11th Illinois Infantry.

Discharged September 28, 1865, by reason of wounds received in action.

DAVID P. SHERFY, *alias* George  
W. Garber -----

-----

Discharged -----

JAMES McMURRY -----

-----

Discharged August 14, 1865.

SOLOMON DENISON -----

-----

Discharged August, 1865.

ALFRED LANGON -----

-----

Discharged October 28, 1865.

FRANK U. MARTIN -----

-----

Died July 14, 1864.

CHARLES DODD -----

Eleventh Illinois Infantry.

Mustered out with regiment.

J. D. LYONS, Q. M. Sergeant.-----

-----

Discharged -----

JOHN SHELDON -----

*Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

## THE BUGLE CORPS OF THE REGIMENT.

This history would be incomplete without mention of this organization, which attracted much attention, both in and out of the army.

The chief of this corps, V. H. Behr, was a German musician of more than ordinary ability, and to him is due the credit of organizing, instructing, and bringing to a high state of perfection one of the finest bugle corps of the whole union arm. These buglers were selected from the enlisted men of the regiment, two from each company, twenty-four in all, the chief making twenty-five.

The selection of these men were left to the discretion of the chief bugler, Sergeant Behr, who sifted the regiment until he found the right men—men who had an ear for music, melody in their souls.

They were all young, bright mulattoes, intelligent, and quick to learn. They were put through a course of instruction that brought forth the best results. Reveille, when sounded by this corps, twenty-five experts, awoke the echoes far and near, eliciting the applause of all listeners.

At such times when the regiment could have dress parade, mounted or dismounted, this corps, led by their chief, marching by fours, playing selected airs, was a marked feature of the parade. One of their favorite airs being, "John Brown's soul goes marching on." On these occasions the camp of the regiment would be thronged with visitors.

Under the tutelage of their chief, they became proficient musicians, many of them expert performers on various instruments.

Many of them had fine voices, and the bones and banjo concerts they gave, attracted many people to the camp. In this particular they became artists of no mean degree.

Probably never before was so much negro melody concentrated in one organization.

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FIRST LIEUTENANT AND ADJUTANT, FRANCIS E. LOVEJOY.

*Francis E. Lovejoy.*

Was born in Sheawassee county, State of Michigan, August 26, 1843, died at Minneapolis, Minn., December 23, 1870. He



FRANK E. LOVEJOY,  
1st Lieut. and Adjt. Third U. S. C. C.





enlisted in Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, August 14, 1862, which company was then doing duty as General Grant's escort. During his connection with this company he was detailed as clerk at General Grant's headquarters, in which capacity he served with marked ability. His conscientious application to duty, intelligence and gentlemanly deportment attracted the attention of General Grant, who advanced him to one of the most responsible positions in his clerical force. He was commissioned First Lieutenant and Adjutant of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, October 18, 1863, being recommended for the position by General Grant, and a more fitting selection could not have been made. His experience as clerk at General Grant's headquarters, where he acquired a thorough knowledge of the "army red tape" eminently fitted him for the position, which he filled with rare ability until failing health compelled him to quit the service. Of a frail constitution, the hardships and exposures of camp life overtaxed his powers of endurance, marking him for one of its victims. He resigned his commission November 12, 1864, and returned to his home in Michigan, taking with him the love and respect of all who knew him.

The master hand that had piloted the business affairs of the regiment through the mazes of "Army red tape" was sadly missed, the loss being irreparable. His place was never filled with the same degree of ability.

In the person of Lieutenant Lovejoy was typified in the fullest sense the soldier, gentleman, scholar and patriotic citizen.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE FIRST BATTALION AT GOODRICH'S LANDING.

In April 1864, the First Battalion, Companies A, E, I, and L, Major Charles H. Chapin commanding, was ordered to Goodrich's Landing, on the west bank of the Mississippi river, in Louisiana, to strengthen the garrison at that place.

The force then stationed at Goodrich's Landing consisted of the 51st and 66th U. S. Colored Infantry and Battery D, 2nd U. S. Light Artillery, Colored. Colonel A. Watson Webber commanded the post.

While stationed at this post, covering a period of about six months, the battalion, under the able command of Major Chapin, did excellent service in freeing that section of the country from roving bands of rebel cavalry and guerrillas, having many bloody encounters with them.

The large cotton plantations in that part of Louisiana, with their well filled store-houses, containing a superabundance of supplies, corn, bacon, sweet potatoes, hay, fodder, etc., large quantities of which had been collected for the use of the Confederate army. This section therefore offered great inducements to the depredatory bands infesting that region, and who plundered the inhabitants irrespective of friend or foe.

These bands of freebooters also made navigation extremely hazardous on the Mississippi river, firing into and capturing steam boats. The almost impenetrable swamps and cane brakes along the bayous and inland streams afforded a safe retreat and hiding place for these bands of plunderers, from which they could defy successful pursuit.

Hardly a night passed that the troopers were not aroused from their sleep by the familiar bugle call "boots and saddles," to be sent out on a wild goose chase after these phantom-like horse-men, only to find a plundered plantation, the depredators having vanished in the darkness after doing their work.

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#### A RAID THAT LEFT DEATH AND DESTRUCTION IN ITS WAKE.

##### MAJOR CHAPIN'S BOLD AND DASHING MOVEMENTS.

The uncivilized and barborous mode of warfare practiced by the marauders in making war on non-combatants, pillaging plantations, murdering and running off their help, waylaying and looting steam-boats, etc., grew to such an alarming extent that the Department Commander determined to put a stop to it by dealing the perpetrators such a blow as they would not soon recover from, in fact, if necessary to exterminate them.

A raid was therefore planned and carried out under the direction of the department commander. Major Chapin was charged with the execution of the orders for ridding the country of these marauders.

The force for this work was made up as follows:

Company A, Captain W. W. Webber, commanding, with Lieutenant James S. Matthews.

Company E, Captain Frank Cook, commanding, with Lieutenant John Shotzell.

Company I, Captain Jesse Brainard, commanding, with Lieutenant E. L. Eggleston.

Company L, Captain Henry Fretz, commanding, with Lieutenant John T. Sherman, making a total of 8 commissioned officers and 265 enlisted men, all of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.

Comparatively speaking this force would not be considered a very formidable one, but it was considered quite sufficient to accomplish the work laid out for it. Only the best men and horses of these companies were taken, the selection being made from the best mounted men, those capable of performing a long, rapid march, the rapidity of movement being deemed the prime factor to insure success. It was not so much a question of the numerical strength of this command as of its personnel, the dash and daring of its officers, and the leadership of its commander, whose intrepid daring and tact fitted him so well for such a hazardous duty. And the implicit confidence of his officers and men insured success almost from the start.

The success of the expedition depended largely, if not wholly, on the rapidity of its movements, boldness of action, and its ability to avoid contact with large bodies of the enemy, which were known to be operating in that vicinity.

Major Chapin's orders led him almost into the stronghold of the enemy. If cut off and surrounded they had but one alternative and that was to cut their way out. Concerning this raid Major Chapin says:

"The men and horses selected for this raid were the choice of the four companies, those best suited for a long, rapid march.

I received my instructions from General Canby, which were to proceed to Ashley Landing, where I was to let my men and horses rest over night, and, taking an early start the next morning proceed to Pinhook, where a large quantity of corn was stored, which I was ordered to destroy, then move on to Floyd, on Bayou Macon, and destroy the corn stored at that place, and also to burn certain buildings.

We moved in light marching order, carrying three days' ration of hardtack and coffee, and 200 rounds of ammunition per man.

Leaving Goodrich's landing early in the morning, we marched thirty miles that day, camping for the night at a point near Ashley, where I used fifteen men for picket and camp guard. These men, by instructions, I sent back to Goodrich's Landing the next morning, it being proposed to start from Ashley with fresh men and horses. Leaving Ashley at an early hour on the following morning, I moved out on the road to Pinhook, giving Lieutenant Sherman the extreme advance with a small detail, and Captain Webber the rear with his company.

Our march was uninterrupted until we reached Tensus river, where we found the crossing guarded by one or two companies of rebel cavalry, commanded by a Captain Collins, who disputed our right to cross the river, but his obstinacy cost him his life.

Charging without counting heads, we went through them like a whirlwind, killing the captain and four of his men.

This little diversion only detained us about ten minutes. Pushing on toward Pinhook, and when near that town, we were attacked simultaneously in front and rear, the enemy seeming to be in considerable force, but we pushed steadily ahead, driving the enemy before us, while the rear guard, Captain Webber commanding, fought them off in that direction.

At this time it began to look as though we were treading on dangerous ground. The enemy were evidently concentrating and closing in around us. But my orders were to go to Pinhook, and remembering the motto on the prairie schooners on the western plains, "Pikes Peak or bust," we adopted the cry "Pinhook or bust," and as we came in sight of the place, swarming with rebel cavalry, it began to look as though it would be a case of bust. However, leaving one company in the rear to hold the enemy in check in that direction, with the other three companies I charged, driving the rebels through and out of the town.

They were not looking for a charge, consequently were not prepared for one, and they evidently overestimated my force, else they would have stood their ground.

On gaining possession of the place we lost no time in firing the warehouses containing the corn and other supplies. Twenty thousand bushels of corn and other army supplies were burned

at this place. We stood guard over the burning buildings, fighting the enemy off until the fire was beyond control. Though our horses were in need of a good feed of the corn we were burning, the enemy pressed us so hard that we had no opportunity to feed them. Leaving Pinhook, fighting our way through the enemy, we took the road to Floyd, which was 20 miles distant.

We were now within a few miles of a large force of the enemy. Their scouting parties were all around us. We were leaving death and destruction in our wake. The country was becoming terribly aroused. The enemy seemed to be on every side of us, and were hourly growing stronger, but they evidently lacked leadership and concert of action. Our safety depended on rapid movements and confusing them. Though the day was hot and we had ridden far and hard, still we kept on, urging our horses to a lively pace. Thus far our march had been marked by an almost continuous skirmish, the enemy pressing us in both front and rear.

The sun was sinking low in the western horizon when we came in sight of Floyd. Before us lay a stretch of open country, fields and pasture land, with here and there a clump of trees. A glance sufficed to show that the conditions were favorable for the movement of cavalry. We could see that the streets were full of rebel cavalry, and that they seemed to be in a state of excitement and confusion. This circumstance argued well for the success of a charge, so closing up the column, we charged down upon them with a yell that carried terror to their scattered ranks, when, breaking in every direction, they fled before us, only stopping on reaching the woods on the other side of the town, under cover of which they made a stand, where we held them at bay, as well as the force in our rear, until the work of destruction was completed.

Ten thousand bushels of corn together with the buildings was destroyed at this place. Night settled down over the scene before this work was completed. The burning buildings lit up a wide expanse, exposing my men to the fire of the enemy. The object of our visit having been accomplished, I determined to make a dash for the open country, to gain which, however, we must ride down the enemy, as he occupied the road in our front. Getting my force well in hand, we moved out in column of fours at a gallop, increasing our pace as

we neared the enemy, and went through them, firing right and left with revolvers.

In the darkness the enemy did not, probably, fully realize the situation until we were upon them, and then it was too late to make effective resistance.

Many of the enemy were killed and wounded in this charge, nine were known to have been killed. Our loss was one man killed and four wounded.

The enemy made but a feeble attempt to follow us after this. They had evidently had enough of it, and we were left to continue our march unmolested. We reached Jose Bayou late that night, where we camped, having marched 74 miles in 19 hours, 30 miles of this distance was covered by continuous skirmishing with the enemy. That night fifteen of our horses died from over-exertion. Leaving Jose Bayou on the following morning, we took up our homeward march, reaching Goodrich's landing that afternoon.

Referring to the incidents of this raid Major Chapin says: "Soon after leaving Ashley, Captain Webber was taken suddenly ill, and being unable to ride his horse an old carryall was procured for him to ride in, but when the fighting commenced he mounted his horse, and took command of his company, saying that he could not fight worth a cent in a wagon.

Lieutenant Calais joined us at Ashley during the night, from which point he rode with the advance, doing scouting duty. He left Goodrich's Landing one night in advance of the command, going out as a scout to gather information respecting the movements of the enemy, in which capacity he did valuable service."

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LIEUTENANT SHOTZELL BRINGS DOWN HIS MAN AT 800 YARDS.

Information having reached camp that a force of rebel cavalry were prowling about somewhere in the vicinity, Major Chapin was ordered out with the effective force of the battalion to make a reconnoissance.

The command left camp in high spirits and fine condition for a fight. Soldiers soon weary of the dull routine of camp duty. Inactivity and idleness breed discontent from which a long train of evils follow, seriously impairing the efficiency and morale of an army. Happily, however, the battalion was exempt from long

seasons of idleness, which undoubtedly conducted to the good discipline and efficiency of the corps.

Proceeding about ten miles, firing by the advance guard denoted the presence of the enemy. Instantly every man tightened his bridle reins and clutched his carbine with a firmer grip.

The enemy when encountered, were about half way across a large clearing, perhaps half a mile in extent. The advance guard opened fire upon them from the edge of the woods, when Major Chapin, taking the gallop, brought the battalion left front into line, the companies delivering their fire as they came into line at the edge of the clearing. By this prompt action the position of the enemy was made untenable, and he fell back across the clearing to the woods on the other side, where he re-formed behind a rail fence and waited for the attack to be renewed.

A direct charge across the open field with the advantage all on the side of the enemy, would involve too great a loss, therefore some other tactics must be adopted to dislodge the enemy. Major Chapin was, however, equal to the emergency. He ordered Company A, Lieutenant Calais commanding, to file off to the left, take the gallop, and gain a point parallel with the fence occupied by the enemy, and attack them on the flank.

Lieutenant Calais executed his order with such celerity that the enemy did not discover it until they found themselves attacked on the flank, and seeing Major Chapin's column charging down upon them in front, they broke in confusion. A running fight was then kept up for several miles, no chance being given the enemy to make a stand.

At the beginning of the fight and while the enemy were forming on the opposite side of the clearing, one of their officers rode out into the clearing, evidently to get a better view of our force, when Lieutenant Shotzell, taking a carbine from one of his men, fired at the officer, who fell from his horse, either killed or wounded. The distance was not less than 800 yards. This was considered a pretty good shot, but was not uncommon in the regiment.

#### A BOLD DASH AND AN EXCITING CHASE.

Lieutenants Calais and Matthews were sent out with Company A to reconnoitre the country south of Goodrich's Landing. They were to make quite a circuit, which would cover a considerable scope of country, and would consume the entire day. They left camp by the river road, proceeding leisurely and with the usual

caution. About noon they left the river road and were returning by another route which run further back from the river and skirted the swamp. On turning an abrupt bend in the road they unexpectedly ran into a force of rebel cavalry, which greatly outnumbered them.

It seemed to be a case of mutual surprise, both parties being somewhat off their guard. But Lieutenant Calais, who was in command, could always be depended upon to extricate himself from a difficult position. Quick to act, he never allowed an enemy to get the advantage of him. Fearless and impetuous, he never stopped to count the cost. If ten times his number had confronted him, he would not have hesitated to measure strength with them. So in this instance, being heartily supported by Lieutenant Matthews, he gave the enemy a volley, and, with a yell, dashed at them. The very audacity of the thing turned the tide of battle in his favor. The enemy, thinking, evidently, that they had met a large force, beat a hasty retreat, Lieutenant Calais and his men pursuing.

The road on which the rebels retreated led into a tangled and densely wooded swamp, in which many of them sought safety, where, in its maze of vines and brambles, mounted men could not follow, they having abandoned their horses.

Lieutenant Calais, singling out the rebel commander, who was in the rear, making desperate efforts to rally his men under cover of the woods, pressed him so closely that he too was compelled to abandon his horse and take to the swamp.

Lieutenant Calais, however, captured the horse, a fine thoroughbred animal, which, with the other captured horses, ten in all, were taken back to camp. The horse captured by Lieutenant Calais proved to be the property of Captain Lusk of the Confederate army, and commander of the opposing force.

The horse was turned over to Captain Webber, who rode him until the close of the war. The horse was christened "Lusk," and was so called by every one in the battalion.



A RAID ACROSS THE RIVER IN THE DEER CREEK COUNTRY.  
CAPTURE OF A REBEL QUARTERMASTER WHO HAD CONFEDERATE  
MONEY TO BURN.

Information having reached headquarters that agents of the Confederate States Government were in the Yazoo delta, buying up and collecting together large quantities of supplies for the Confederate army, Major Chapin was ordered to embark his battalion on a steamer, which was sent up from Vicksburg for that purpose, cross the river and scout the Deer Creek country.

Proceeding as directed, Major Chapin disembarked his command on the East side of the Mississippi river, from which point he scouted the country above and below along the river front, and for some distance in the interior. He met no force sufficient to retard his march. A few scattering bands of bushwhackers were met here and there, which were quickly brushed aside, but they proved very annoying, as they hung on the flanks, front and rear, firing from ambush and worrying the pickets.

The region passed over was one of the richest cotton producing sections of the south. In this section, abounding in wealth, rich in the sinews of war, the Confederate authorities were gathering supplies for their destitute soldiers in the field. Large quantities of these supplies were found and destroyed.

At one place a Confederate Quartermaster was captured. He had in his possession a large amount of Confederate money, with which he was paying for supplies for the Confederate army. The money was confiscated and subsequently turned over to the proper authorities.

This Quartermaster bewailed the loss of the supplies that were destroyed, but seemed to care little for the loss of the money, saying, "we have money to burn, but we need the supplies badly."

The object of the raid having been accomplished, the command was headed back toward the river, the point of debarkation, where the boat was found in waiting. On reaching the river, Captain Frank Cook rode down the bank to water his horse, when the horse sank in the quicksand, the captain having barely time to

free himself from the saddle before the horse went out of sight.

It had been the intention to water all the horses at this place, but after Captain Cook's experience a safer watering place was found.

Embarking on the steamer, the command was soon back across the river in their camp at Goodrich's Landing.

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FIRST LIEUTENANT F. W. CALAIS.

The subject of this sketch was born in Iroquois County, State of Illinois, in 1842. He enlisted September 1861, in Company D, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, then being organized at Ottawa, Illinois. On joining the regiment, he was detailed to organize and instruct a corps of buglers for the regiment, which duty he performed with credit, bringing the corps to a high standard of proficiency. Going to the front with the regiment, he was detailed as chief bugler, doing duty as such during the Fort Henry and Donelson campaigns, when at his own request he returned to duty in his company, with which he served continuously until October 1863, taking an active part in all the battles and campaigns of that regiment from Shiloh to Vicksburg.

October 9, 1863, he was commissioned First Lieutenant by the President, and assigned to Company A, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. He was active in enlisting and drilling the first company enrolled for that regiment.

By his conspicuous gallantry, soldierly deportment, dash and daring, Lieutenant Calais contributed largely to the splendid record the regiment achieved. Always on the active list he took a prominent part in all the battles and campaigns the regiment was engaged in. Never lagging, foremost in every position of danger, persevering when others faltered, in him was exemplified the qualities of a leader of men.

Lieutenant Calais' record in the regiment furnishes many examples of dash and daring, and was characterized throughout by a devotion to duty and efficiency that but few officers attained. His presence on the firing line or leading the charge, inspired confidence and contributed largely to the victories won.

The war being nearly at its close, he resigned his commission May 26, 1865, and returned to the pursuits of civil life.



FRANK W. CALAIS,  
1st Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.



## CHAPTER XII.

EXPEDITION TO BENTON AND BLACK RIVER APRIL AND MAY, 1864.

This expedition left Vicksburg May 4, 1864 and was composed of the following troops: Detachments from the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, the latter commanded by Major Cook; First Kansas mounted Infantry, making a total force of 244 men and officers, mounted men, under command of Colonel E. D. Osband. One brigade of infantry, commanded by Colonel James H. Coates, the Seventh Ohio Battery, and Bolton's Illinois Battery, making a total force of about 3,500 men, all under command of Brigadier-General John McArthur.

The expedition scouted the country between the Yazoo and Big Black rivers, embracing a section of country over which the enemy held sway, and to venture into which meant hard fighting from the start.

During the first three days' march, none but small, scattering bands of the enemy were encountered, but on the fourth day, May 7, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry having the advance, encountered a force of the enemy, about 400 cavalry, with whom they had a sharp skirmish, the enemy retiring.

As the regiment approached Benton, the enemy were found prepared to give battle, being posted in the streets of the town.

Major Cook directed Captain Coykendall, with his own and another company to flank the enemy's position by moving under cover of some timber, while he, with the balance of the regiment, moved to attack them in front. The flank movement was a complete surprise to the enemy, who, evidently believing that they were being surrounded, became so disconcerted that they fled precipitately, closely pursued through and beyond the town by the charging squadrons of Major Cook.

This precipitate retreat on the part of the enemy may, however, been intended as a decoy, for Major Cook and his men were soon brought up with a round turn, and a six gun battery opened fire on them from an adjacent hill, which sent them to the right about in a hurry, seeking cover behind a rise of ground. Fortunately at this opportune moment, Bolton's Illinois battery, six Rodman guns, coming to the front went into position, when an exciting artillery duel ensued, which, though of short duration,

was decisive, the enemy's guns being no match for Rodman's rifled pieces, were soon put out of business, not, however, until one of Bolton's guns was disabled.

Moving forward again, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry pushed the enemy back about five miles, when he made another stand, seizing the opportunity while the regiment was moving along a narrow road inclosed by a high fence on both sides, where they raked the column with a withering fire.

The only avenue of escape from the fenced road was through a large open hallway of a house opposite the column; this Major Cook took advantage of by galloping his command through the hallway, thus gaining the open field on the other side, from which point he drove the enemy from his position. It was stated that, during the clatter of the cavalry through the hallway, an old lady sat composedly fanning herself in an adjoining room.

Soon after this affair the regiment was recalled, and joined the main column, which went into camp near Benton, where it remained several days, detachments doing some light scouting in the meantime.

On the 13th the command moved out again, going eastward to strike the Mississippi Central Railroad. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry having the advance, encountered the enemy in considerable force. Major Cook formed his men in an open field, and, after some skirmishing, charged them, but encountering a deep ravine or gully that he could not cross, the regiment was brought to an unexpected halt when within short range of the enemy. Conditions being equal, as neither party could come to close quarters, Major Cook quickly dismounted his men, who, taking advantage of such cover as the nature of the ground afforded, soon made the enemy's position untenable, and he withdrew from the fight. It was in this fight that Captain George C. Starr, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, fell mortally wounded, shot through the stomach. He suffered intensely, as he had to be carried in the ambulance the remainder of that and the next day, and died two days later in Yazoo City. His remains were taken back with the regiment to Vicksburg, and there placed in a burial case and taken to his relatives in Indianapolis, Indiana. Lieutenant Pet-tengill accompanied the remains. Subsequently a brother officer performed the same sad duty with the remains of Lieutenant Pet-





CAPT. A. J. HAYNES,  
Third U. S. C. C.



tengill, who was killed in action about a year after. On reaching Vaughn Station, on the Mississippi Central Railroad, the station-house was burned by order of the general commanding.

From Vaughn Station the command moved to attack a force that was guarding the bridge over Big Black river, but finding it impracticable to reach the bridge, on account of the swampy condition of the country, the command, after destroying some trestle-work and track, returned to Benton, thence to Vicksburg by way of Yazoo City, arriving at Vicksburg on the 18th, having marched over 200 miles, and fought the enemy almost daily.

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Report of Brigadier-General John McArthur, U. S. Army, commanding expedition from Vicksburg to Yazoo City, Miss., May 4-21, 1864, with skirmishes at Benton (7th and 9th), at Luce's Plantation (15) and at other points.

HEADQUARTERS POST AND DEFENSES,

*Vicksburg, Miss., May 25, 1864.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to submit the following report of the Yazoo expedition:

In obedience to instructions from the Major-General commanding the district, I left Vicksburg, Miss., on the morning of the 4th of May, in command of an expedition, consisting of the Forty-sixth and Seventy-sixth Infantry, Colonel Dornblaser commanding; the Eleventh, Seventy-second, and One-hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois Infantry, Colonel Coates commanding; Company L, Second Illinois Light Artillery, and the Seventh Ohio Battery, Captain Bolton, chief of artillery, commanding; First Kansas Mounted Infantry, detachments of the Fifth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, and Third U. S. Cavalry, African descent, Colonel Osband, Third U. S. Cavalry, African descent, commanding, and then proceeded in the direction of Messinger's Ford, thence northwest through Oak Ridge and Mechanicsburg, visiting Scott's Ferry, at Big Black, destroying the same, intercepting the wagon train of two regiments that had crossed to this side to reinforce the forces that were immediately on my front. I then started in the direction of Benton, having

constant skirmishing, the cavalry, however, pushing the enemy sufficiently rapid that no delay was experienced until we reached Benton, where they made a stand, resisting the efforts of my cavalry to dislodge them until the arrival of the infantry, when, after a short and spirited skirmish, they retreated, closely followed for six miles north of Benton.

Seeing pursuit in that direction fruitless, I then returned to Benton. From information received from intercepted dispatches from General Adams, together with intelligence gained from other sources, I found that the enemy were concentrating all their available force on my front, and had already succeeded in crossing two more regiments, and that General Adams had arrived and assumed command, thereby accomplishing the principal object of the expedition. I abandoned the idea (as communicated to you by way of Yazoo City) of crossing the Big Black and moving on Canton, and contented myself with destroying the ferry at Moor's Bluff and directing General Ellet, of the Mississippi Marine Brigade, to remain at Yazoo City, whither I sent my wagon train and sick and wounded, and awaited at Benton the completion of the "concerted measures" (see General Adams' dispatches) to drive us from the Yazoo. After waiting two days, and seeing no serious designs in carrying out their intention, I moved toward Vaughan's Station, on the Mississippi Central Railroad, the enemy contesting every advantageous position until we reached Luce's plantation, where they endeavored to test our strength, but were soon driven from their position, my cavalry and artillery behaving handsomely and fighting keenly. Meeting with no more serious opposition we destroyed the railroad station at Vaughan's, following the road to Big Black, destroying the trestle-work in such a manner as will render it useless for some time to come, returning to Yazoo City, and thence by the valley road to Vicksburg, where we arrived on the morning of the 21st instant.

Our loss in killed during the entire expedition was two commissioned officer, 1 non-commissioned officer and 2 privates; in wounded, 14 privates, (see surgeon's report accompanying this for names), comparatively light with that of the enemy, who were severely punished wherever they attempted to stand.

Results: A wholesome fear on the part of the enemy from painful experience, that we have sufficient force at

this point to move into the interior when desired, the effect of which will, in my opinion, be the withdrawal of their forces west of the Mississippi Central Railroad, if not of Pearl River; also compelling them to concentrate on my front at that time instead of sending them north as they might have done; the destruction of the railroad communication with Canton; the vast advantage it has been to the new recruits of the command, of which we have a large portion, increasing their morale and giving them a prestige that cannot be over-estimated to troops first brought under fire.

All of which is attributable to the commanding officers of brigades, and in fact throughout the whole command my thanks are due to all, as well as to my staff, for alacrity and spirit displayed in the execution of every order, "Excelsior" seeming to be the motto of every portion of the command.

I desire, before closing my report, to call attention to Brigadier-General Ellet, commanding Marine Brigade, for his kindness and assistance in doing everything he could to make the expedition successful.

I have the honor to be, your most obedient servant,

J. McARTHUR.

*Brigadier-General.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL H. C. ROGERS,

*Assistant Adjutant-General,*

*District of Vicksburg.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXIX, Part 1, p. 7-8.)

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Report of Col. Embury D. Osband, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, of Skirmishes at and near Mechanicsburg.

HEADQUARTERS THIRD U. S. COLORED CAVALRY.

*Haynes' Bluff, Miss., April 25, 1864.*

*Captain:* I have the honor to respectively report that pursuant to orders, I moved at 6 a. m. on the morning of the 19th of April with one battalion, Tenth Missouri Cavalry, 90 men and 4 officers, Maj. W. H. Lusk commanding, and the Second Battalion, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, 138 men and 12 officers, Maj. J. B. Cook commanding, on the Yazoo City road. Dividing

my command to cover both ridge and valley road, I proceeded to within 7 miles of Mechanicsburg; returning to the column encamped at the residence of Mr. Willday, on the valley road.

Moving at daylight on the 20th, and accompanied by the First Kansas Mounted Infantry as far as Mechanicsburg, we moved toward Yazoo City, driving in our front about 50 of the enemy's skirmishers. The advance guard of the Tenth Missouri Cavalry, under Captain Cain, was exceedingly fine and worthy of special mention.

About 9 miles beyond Mechanicsburg we captured 2 out of the 4 men posted as a picket, and learned that Mabry's brigade, formerly either Adams' or Stark's, was somewhere in our front with four pieces of artillery and 700 men. Halting in a little belt of timber for the infantry to close up we saw about 20 men in our front and dismounted two companies to flank them, when instantly the enemy appeared on our position with an ambushed battery of four pieces, distant about three-quarters of a mile, continuing a rapid fire for nearly an hour, during which time our dismounted companies rejoined the command. Having received an order from Colonel Scofield, commanding, I fell back as directed to a point near to, and so as to defend the passage of the cross-road leading to Liverpool Heights.

While holding this position the enemy, who had followed us, attempted to force our position held by the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Maj. J. B. Cook commanding. Major Cook arranged an ambuscade for them behind a small ridge jutting out to the road. They advanced about one regiment strong in column, but on receiving the unexpected fire from the ridge they were thrown into confusion, and on being pushed by the charging party, a lieutenant and 12 men, all the well-mounted men there were in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, broke into fragments and were pursued fully one mile in the wildest confusion to the enemy's rear line of battle, who, mistaking them in the cloud of dust for our column, poured into them a volley of musketry.

Their loss must have been severe, 5 dead, and many wounded men and horses being left upon the field.

Holding our position undisturbed till 7 p. m. we moved by order in the rear of the infantry to Liverpool Heights.

Leaving there at 12:30 a. m. on the morning of April 23, we marched to Haynes' Bluff, undisturbed by the enemy.

I desire to particularly mention the conduct of Maj. William H. Lusk, Tenth Missouri Cavalry; Maj. J. B. Cook, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry; Second Lieutenant Edwin Farley, C Company, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, who led the charge.

I am, captain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,  
*Commanding Third  
U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

CAPT. W. H. RANDALL,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol., XXXII, Part 1, p. 674-675.)

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*Major-General S. A. Hurlbut to Major-General J. B. McPherson.*

HEADQUARTERS SIXTEENTH ARMY CORPS,

*Memphis, Tenn., April 10, 1864.*

MAJOR-GENERAL J. B. MCPHERSON,

*Commanding Department of the Tennessee.*

*Extract.*

*General:* My view of the best mode of covering that wretched speculation, Government leased plantations, is to occupy Yazoo City with one regiment of white troops, two of colored infantry, and Osband's colored cavalry, with a good battery under a good officer.

Osband's negro cavalry are good, and if properly armed they will handle Ross' brigade. They now require 700 carbines, which I have not to give them. With this force at Yazoo City, Grenada would not be tenable, except by heavy force, which cannot be spared.

I am, General, your obedient servant,

S. A. HURLBUT,  
*Major-General.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol., XXXII, Part III, p. 317.)

## FIRST LIEUTENANT FREDERICK FERNALD.

Was born in Gloucester County, State of Maine, September 4, 1837.

He enlisted at Racine, Wisconsin, September 4, 1861, in Company K, Eighth Wisconsin Infantry, the "Eagle Regiment," and was mustered into the service at Madison, Wis., September 17, 1861, as a corporal. He served with his regiment during General Carlin's campaign against the rebel General Jeff Thompson in southeast Missouri, participating in the battle of Fredericktown, October 21, 1861, and the siege and capture of New Madrid and Island No. 10, March, 1862. His regiment joining the army under General Grant, he was with it during the advance on Corinth, Miss., April 22d to May 31st, including the battle of Farmington. He was with his regiment in the battle of Iuka, Miss., Sept. 19th and 20th, and in the battle of Corinth, October 3 and 4, 1862. He was with his regiment during the campaign in West Tennessee and Northern Mississippi, in November and December, 1862, and in the siege of Vicksburg, including the famous charge of May 22, and the battles of Raymond, Jackson and Champion Hills.

He was discharged from the Eighth Wisconsin Infantry for promotion as Second Lieutenant in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, December 18, 1863, and assigned to Company F, promoted to First Lieutenant January 23, 1865, for meritorious conduct in action. He was mustered out of the service with the regiment, January 26, 1866, Lieutenant Fernald's promotion is a sufficient guarantee of his efficiency as an officer. He brought with him to the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry the valuable experience acquired by two years of active field service in one of the most famous regiments in the entire union army.

He was a splendid drill master, a strict disciplinarian, fearless and conscientious in the discharge of every duty. He was conspicuous in every battle, skirmish and campaign the regiment was engaged in.

After the war, he settled on a farm in Iowa, where he prospered, and raised up an interesting family.



FREDERICK FERNALD,  
1st Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.





## CHAPTER XIII.

## EXPEDITION TO JACKSON AND PEARL RIVER,

July 2-10, 1864.

This expedition left Vicksburg July 2, 1864, and was composed of the following troops; detachments from the Fifth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, the latter commanded by Major Cook, making a cavalry force of 600 men, commanded by Major Mumford, 5th Illinois Cavalry, an infantry force of 2,200, and Bolton's Battery, six guns, commanded by Brigadier-General Dennis, all under command of Major-General H. W. Slocum. The command moved out to Big Black river, where it camped on the night of July 2d. Crossing Big Black on the morning of the 3d, the command took up line of march toward Clinton, camping that night on the old battle ground of Champion Hills.

Resuming the march on the morning of the 4th, the command reached Clinton about noon, near which place the enemy was encountered in small force, with whom there was some skirmishing with the advance guard.

Leaving Clinton on the morning of the 5th, the command moved towards Jackson, the cavalry by one road and the infantry by another and a shorter route, the two roads forming a junction further on. At the junction of these roads, the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, having the advance, encountered the enemy in considerable force, with whom they had a sharp fight, suffering some loss in killed and wounded. Here the infantry formed a junction with the cavalry, the whole command moving forward in one column, the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry in advance. When within 3 or 4 miles of Jackson, the enemy contested the ground stubbornly, when the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Cook commanding, was ordered to the front. Major Cook deployed a line of skirmishers supporting it with a company on each flank, with orders to swing to the center in case the skirmishers were pressed too hard, and following with the balance of the regiment, moving in platoon front, keeping the road.

In this formation, he passed the advance line of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, and moved rapidly forward, meeting and repulsing a charge by the enemy's rear guard, about 200 strong,

and in turn charged them, rushing them back onto their main line, on account of the dust, Major Cook was only appraised of the close proximity of the main body of the enemy when they opened fire on him with a six-gun battery at close range, not more than 400 yards, from which he was compelled to seek shelter with his men in the dry bed of a creek, where, dismounted, they fought the enemy for nearly an hour while the shot and shell from Bolton's battery, on a hill in the rear, hissed through the air over the heads of himself and men, who were mid-way between the lines.

With the thunder of Bolton's guns, the rattle of musketry chimed in as the Forth-sixth Illinois Infantry came into action.

The enemy had taken a strong position on a hill, where they were partially screened by timber, and only yielded the ground after a stubborn fight of two hours duration, when they fell back, taking the Canton road, thus leaving the way open to Jackson. After this encounter, the command marched into Jackson, unopposed, and camped for the night.

On the afternoon of the 6th, the command moved out about four miles, and camped for the night near the scene of the fight of the previous day. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was thrown forward to picket the camp. Company B, Captain Emery commanding, occupied the most advanced position, where he was soon attacked, the enemy being in strong force. Major Cook hastened to the support of Captain Emery, whom he found gallantly holding his ground. Here the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry withstood the first shock of the battle that followed. The Fifth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry and the Second Wisconsin Cavalry coming to the rescue, were soon engaged, when a desperate cavalry fight ensued. Bolton's Illinois Battery and the Forty-sixth Illinois Infantry participating.

The enemy formed along the crest of the hill, which was partially encircled by a hedge-roe, behind which their movements were covered to some extent. Through the gap in the hedge-row, the enemy made repeated charges, showing great bravery and dash, the leader of the last charge they made, a gallant officer, fell little short of our line of battle.

The sun sank below the western horizon, her last flickering rays casting ghostly shadows over the bloody field; twilight faded,





JOSEPH SEDGWICK.

Quartermaster Sergt. Third U. S. C. C.

deepening into the gloom of night, before the firing wholly ceased, when the combatants, exhausted, threw themselves on the ground, sleeping on their arms.

On the morning of the 7th, with the first indication of day, the battle was renewed with increased fury, charge followed charge with a boldness and determination on both sides that showed the discipline of trained troops. The thunder of artillery, answering shot for shot from commanding positions, mingled with the continuous rattle of small arms was unceasing for three hours, the tide of battle alternating as position after position was lost or won, when at last the enemy, in a desperate charge to regain a lost position, being repulsed with great loss, contented themselves with assuming the defensive, and the Union forces, being much exhausted and short of ammunition, slowly retired, moving toward Vicksburg, the enemy making but a feeble attempt to follow.

It was during the fight of the 5th, near Jackson, that Orderly Sergeant Joseph Sedgwick, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, was killed, a fragment of one of the enemy's shells striking him on the head, killing him instantly. He was a very promising young officer, and had been recommended for promotion as Second Lieutenant. He had served two years in the 124th Illinois Infantry, and had been transferred to the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry for promotion. He was hastily buried where he fell.

During this expedition, the regiment suffered a loss of one officer and 7 enlisted men killed, and 10 enlisted men wounded.

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REPORT OF MAJ. GEN. HENRY W. SLOCUM, U. S. ARMY, COMMANDING DISTRICT OF VICKSBURG.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF VICKSBURG,

*Vicksburg, Miss., July 10, 1864.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to report that on the 2nd of July I left here with 2,200 infantry, 600 cavalry, and six pieces of artillery, for the purpose of destroying the bridge over Pearl river. We had slight skirmishing on our advance, but reached Jackson with the loss of but 2 officers and 8 men. I destroyed the bridge which I think was designed merely for temporary use, probably for the purpose of transferring the rolling-stock from the Miss-

Mississippi Central Railroad to their eastern roads. While I was in Jackson the enemy took position on the road leading to Clinton, about three miles from Jackson. I attacked them at 4 a. m. on the 7th instant, and after an engagement of two hours' duration forced him back, and moved on toward Clinton. I could not follow them, having only sufficient supplies to last my command till it could reach Big Black River.

My losses are about 230 in killed and wounded and 20 missing. No property of any kind was lost or abandoned.

The forces of the enemy consisted of a brigade under Gholson, a force from Louisiana under Colonel Scott, and a few men under General Wirt Adams. I was informed that a regiment under Colonel (or General) Richardson was also present and took part in the engagement.

The officers and men of my command, without exception, behaved in a manner entitling them to the highest praise.

I shall leave here to-morrow with a force nearly the same, and attempt to reach Canton, hoping thereby to prevent their detachments from being sent to Forrest. I will send a report more in detail at a very early day.

I am, Colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. W. SLOCUM,

*Major-General, Commanding.*

LIEUTENANT-COL. W. T. CLARK,

*Assistant Adjutant-General,*

*Department of the Tennessee..*

(R. R. Vol. XXXII, Part 1, p. 242.)

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FIRST LIEUTENANT D. E. POTTER.

The subject of this sketch was born in Fort Ann, Washington County, State of New York, November 20, 1836. He enlisted in Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, August 24, 1861. The regiment was ordered to Cairo in November following, when the company was assigned to duty as General Grant's escort, acting as such until after the fall of Vicksburg. General Grant having been assigned to a higher command in the East, left his escort at Vicksburg.

As a member of the escort, always near General Grant, he



D. E. POTTER,  
1st Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.





carried dispatches to corps and Division commanders on every battle field from Fort Donelson to Vicksburg. Early in the war he was promoted to Corporal. He was discharged from Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, July 11, 1863, for promotion as Captain in the Fiftieth U. S. Colored Infantry, which position he resigned August 9, 1864, to accept a position as Second Lieutenant in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and was promoted to First Lieutenant July 22, 1865. He commanded his company, D, on the Grierson raid from Memphis to Vicksburg, December and January 1864-5, taking part in the battle of Egypt Station and Franklin, Miss., December 28th and January 2.

He was successively detailed as regimental Adjutant and as Assistant Adjutant-General, Third Brigade, Cavalry Division, District of West Tennessee, and was later detailed September 13, 1865, as Superintendent of President's Island, by special order of Major-General Smith.

He was mustered out with the regiment at Memphis, Tenn., January 26, 1866. Evidently General Grant had in his mind such men of his escort as Lieutenant Potter, when writing his report to the War Department July 6, 1863, he said: "It would not be overstating the merits of this company to say that many of them would fill with credit any position in a Cavalry regiment."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

GRAND GULF EXPEDITION, JULY 11TH TO 20TH, 1864.

THE FIGHT AT GRAND GULF, JULY 16TH, 1864.

Relative to the fight at Grand Gulf, Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Cook, commanding Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, says:

"This expedition composed of cavalry and infantry, Major-General Slocum commanding, left Vicksburg July 11th, 1864, marched via Black river, Edwards Station, Rocky Springs and Port Gibson, with almost continuous skirmishing. On the 16th, the command camped for the night at Grand Gulf. My regiment the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, was thrown forward to picket the roads. I posted one company on the Grand Gulf and Port Gibson road, on a hill about half a mile from my camp, and about two miles from the main command.

At early daybreak the next morning my picket on the Grand Gulf and Port Gibson road was attacked. At the call "to arms," my men were quickly in line, and we moved out, dismounted, double quick, to support the picket, as we had to go up a steep hill my men were nearly out of breath when we reached the scene of action. My reserve picket was making a determined stand. I left one company to re-inforce them, and moved to the left with the balance of the regiment, going through a ravine, which brought me out on the enemy's flank and within a few yards of their line of battle, when bringing my men front into line, we gave them a volley with our carbines, and dashed forward, firing with revolvers, at which the enemy broke in confusion, scattering through the brush and gullies. We pushed on for some distance, but meeting no opposition, returned to our camp. On our way back, I came upon two men of my regiment, who had a prisoner in their charge, who told me he was the officer in command of the forces that had attacked us, and introduced himself as Major E. A. Peyton.

One of the men had his sabre and belt, which I took possession of. It was a common cavalry sabre. I have it yet.

Major Peyton was captured by Lieutenant Farley and his men, who charged from the picket post, while I charged on their flank.

I conducted Major Peyton to General Slocum's headquarters, and introduced him to the general, who, extending his hand, said, "Major Peyton, I am very glad to meet you," to which greeting Major Peyton replied, "I regret very much General that I cannot say the same to you."

Two days prior to the capture of Major Peyton, the enemy captured one of our officers, Major Shorey, of the First Mississippi Mounted Rifles. Subsequently Major Peyton was exchanged for Major Shorey, the exchange being conducted by Major McKee, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, on the picket lines at Vicksburg. Major McKee being then Provost Marshall of that post.

Major Peyton was a veteran of the Mexican war, serving under Colonel Jefferson Davis. After the war Major Peyton resided at Satartia, Miss., where he became prominent as a republican, and was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of that State.

Major McKee, who conducted the exchange of prisoners, set-

tled in Mississippi after the war, locating at Jackson, which district he represented in the U. S. Congress.

In the fight at Grand Gulf, the enemy lost, in prisoners, their commanding officer, Major Peyton, and eight enlisted men, and in killed five enlisted men.

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THE GRAND GULF EXPEDITION.

Of this expedition and the fight at Grand Gulf, Lieutenant E. Farley, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, says:

This expedition was composed of the following troops: First brigade, Second New Jersey Cavalry, Nineteenth Pennsylvania cavalry and First Mississippi Mounted Rifles, commanded by Colonel Joseph Karge, Colonel Second New Jersey Cavalry, Third Brigade, Fifth Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanded by Major H. P. Mumford, Major Fifth Illinois Cavalry, all under command of Brigadier-General A. W. Ellet, Mississippi Marine brigade. In addition, Major-General Slocum, with an infantry force of 2,000 men, moved down the river by boat, flanking the cavalry force.

The cavalry force left Vicksburg on the morning of July 11th, 1864, crossed Black River, and proceeded in the direction of Edwards Station, which place was reached on the 12th. From Edwards Station the command took a more southerly course, meeting with considerable resistance during the day, and camped near Utica on the night of the 13th. When near Utica, the First Mississippi Mounted Rifles, Major Shorey commanding, being temporarily separated from the main command, was attacked by a superior force of the enemy, and after making a gallant fight against overwhelming odds, Major Shorey and quite a number of his men were captured by the enemy, and several of them killed.

On the 14th the command marched to Port Gibson, where it camped that night. Before going into camp, two companies of the Second New Jersey Cavalry, were sent out to procure forage for the horses, when they were attacked, and in the fight that ensued, 25 or 30 of them were taken prisoners, and several wounded. Leaving Port Gibson on the 15th, the command marched to

Grand Gulf, where Generals Slocum and Ellet were waiting with the boats.

The command went into camp along the Grand Gulf and Port Gibson road. This road ran along the crest of a ridge, which curved inland as it left the river, nearly forming a semi-circle for two miles or more. Other and smaller ridges intersected it at irregular intervals on both sides of the road.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry having marched in the rear of the command that day, occupied a position, when camped, farthest out on the road, and was assigned the duty of picketing that road, one company being detailed for this duty.

This company was posted half a mile from our camp, in a strong position, with vedettes well thrown out. Nothing occurred to break the stillness that pervaded the camp until about daylight, when our picket on the road above mentioned was savagely attacked, the firing at the reserve post being by volley and continuous, indicated that the attack was being made in force.

The regiment was soon under arms and moving out, double quick, toward the scene of action. My company was camped on the right of the regiment and farthest from the scene of action, the regiment being stretched out along the road. I heard Colonel Cook give the order to turn out dismounted, double-quick, and though I got my men into line very quickly, the balance of the regiment, led by Colonel Cook, preceded me. Colonel Cook, with several companies, all, I think, except mine, went to the left of the road, going through a ravine which ran parallel with the road. I kept the road to near where the reserve picket was stationed, when I filed to the right, following one of the small ridges that intersected the one the picket was posted on.

The enemy, who proved to be the Seventh Mississippi Mounted Infantry, commanded by Major E. A. Peyton, evidently saw the flank movement of Colonel Cook, and wisely avoided him by moving to the southwest side of the road, some retiring in seeming confusion, but a small force led by Major Peyton in person, and on foot, appeared on another ridge directly in my front and about 200 yards distant, coming towards us with a yell. Seeing Colonel Cook approaching on the flank with the balance of the regiment, I dashed forward to meet the charge of Peyton, believing that he would not be able to hold his men, menaced as he

was in front and flank. As anticipated Major Peyton's men broke before we came to close quarters, though the Major was gallantly urging them on, and finding himself entirely deserted he came forward and surrendered. All of this occurred in a few minutes and under considerable excitement. I placed Major Peyton in charge of a Sergeant and one man while I pursued the retreating and scattered enemy.

When Major Peyton came toward me to surrender, one of my men, misconstruing the movement, leveled his carbine and would have killed him had I not noticed it and interposed. I have never met Major Peyton since placing him in charge of the two men. I received a kind letter from him years ago, written from Satartia, Miss., in which he says he has not forgotten the incident, and expresses profound gratitude.

He informed me that General Adams ordered him to make a night ride, find our camp, attack us in the morning and ascertain our strength and report same to him. He says he carried out instructions to the letter, except that he did not report.

We embarked on the boats of the Marine Brigade on the 7th, and returned to Vicksburg, reaching there the next day.

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## CHAPTER XV.

EXPEDITION FROM VICKSBURG TO NATCHEZ, FORT ADAMS AND WOODVILLE—SEPTEMBER 21ST TO OCTOBER 11TH, 1864.—THE CAPTURE OF HOLMES' LOUISIANA BATTERY BY SABRE CHARGE.

Relative to the capture of Holmes' Battery, Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Cook says: "On the night of October 5th, 1864, my regiment, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, camped about a half mile south of Woodville, Miss.

About daybreak the next morning, my regiment being in readiness to move, Colonel Osband stated to me that he had received information that a force of the enemy were on the plantation of Judge McGehee, distant about a mile and a half where they had taken position during the night, with the intention of attacking us at daylight; that the force consisted of Colonel Gober's Mississippi Cavalry, and Holmes' Louisiana Battery, three guns,

And in addition, they were expecting to be re-inforced by two regiments of Louisiana Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Scott.

With this information in his possession, Colonel Osband proposed to be the attacking party himself, and made the following disposition of his forces for the attack: I was to move to the left with my regiment, make a flank or rear attack on the enemy, the Fifth Illinois Cavalry and one section of the Second Illinois Light Artillery co-operating with me, while Colonel Osband, with the balance of the command, would move to the right. Colonel Osband furnished me with a guide, a colored man, who seemed to be well posted as to the position of the enemy and the roads. I moved out on the Liberty road, but left it about half a mile east of Woodville, turning south, and going through a large plantation, parallel with the Bayou Sara road and about half a mile east of it.

We were galloping over an open stretch of ground, when, coming in view of a cluster of trees, the guide, pointing to it, said, "the battery is there," and almost simultaneously the battery opened fire on us, the shot, however, going over us. At the same time the battery opened fire a line of mounted skirmishers advanced from the edge of the timber, which I took to indicate the position of Gober's Cavalry, who were evidently supporting the battery. At this time the Section of the Second Illinois Light Artillery, Lieutenant Platt commanding, came into position in my rear, and opened fire on the enemy, the Fifth Illinois Cavalry supporting the battery.

I diverged slightly to the left to get out of range of our battery, and moved forward at a gallop, when the line of mounted skirmishers fell back into the timber. At this point my progress was checked by a deep ravine, to cross which it was necessary to pass over a rickety bridge in column of twos; this bridge was made of loose poles, and the slow process of crossing over it, offered the enemy an opportunity which they failed to take advantage of. Effecting the crossing without loss other than the time consumed, we charged over the intervening ground, and as we entered the timber, the enemy, after delivering a volley, fell back. It was here that several horses were shot down in the front rank of Captain Edland's company, which checked the company temporarily. From this point I moved on with the balance of the command, taking a road that diverged more to my left. As we

advanced at a steady gallop, Gober's cavalry scattered, some on one side of the road and some on the other. I made no effort to take prisoners, my object now being to reach the battery. My guide led me past Judge McGehee's place, thence north until we came to the guns, which had already surrendered.

I found Captain Edland and Lieutenant Chapin engaged in getting the prisoners out of a ravine, when I reached the guns. After leaving Captain Edland and Lieutenant Chapin at the point where the horses were shot, I did not see them again until I found them where they were getting the prisoners out of the ravine.

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THE FIGHT NEAR WOODVILLE, MISS.

Capture of Holmes' Louisiana Battery, October 6, 1864.

In reference to the capture of the above named battery, Lieutenant Farley, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, makes the following statement:

"Our brigade, composed of detachments from the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, 4th, 5th, and 11th Illinois Cavalry, and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, one Section of the 26th Ohio Battery, and one Section of the Second Illinois Light Artillery, in all about 1,250 men, Colonel E. D. Osband commanding, took boats at Natchez, Miss., on October 4, 1864, and proceeded down the river to Tunica Bend, where we were to disembark and proceed inland in the direction of Woodville, Miss. We were to cooperate with other troops sent out at the same time, one column overland from Natchez, and another from Morganza, further down the river, the object being to harass the enemy, break up their recruiting camps and capture stock and supplies.

We disembarked at the point designated, on the morning of the 5th, and took up line of march toward Woodville, which is 18 miles east from Fort Adams, the Fifth Illinois Cavalry in advance, but hearing firing to our right and thinking the expedition from down the river was attacked we veered to the right, going about ten miles in the direction of Sligo, when the firing ceased. We then resumed the direct march to Woodville, reaching that place late in the evening. The Fifth Illinois Cavalry dashed into the town, procuring the mail, seizing the telegraph

office, and taking a few prisoners. We went into camp for the night a short distance south of the town, on the Woodville and Sligo road, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry on the extreme left of the brigade. During the night a negro came into our camp, imparting the information that a large force of the enemy, composed of cavalry and artillery, commanded by Colonel Gober, had just reached the plantation of Judge McGehee, three and a half miles south of Woodville, on the Woodville and Bayou Sara road and that they intended to attack us at daylight the next morning.

He also said that they expected to be reinforced by two regiments of Louisiana cavalry, commanded by Colonel Scott.

On receipt of this information, Colonel Osband gave orders to be ready to move at daybreak. The eastern horizon gave no indications yet of the approach of the new day when the command was in the saddle.

The following disposition of the troops was made for the attack: The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Fifth Illinois Cavalry, and the Section of the Second Illinois Light Artillery were sent to attack the enemy on the left flank and rear, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Cook commanding, taking the advance, while the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, and the Section of the 26th Ohio Battery, commanded by Colonel Osband in person, moved on the enemy's right flank.

Major Cook, leading the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, moved rapidly, crossing to the east side of the Bayou Sara road, where he entered an old field north of the McGehee house. This field was separated from the enemy's position by a ravine extending east and west. There was a bridge on the Bayou Sara road crossing this ravine, and another small bridge for plantation use, crossing it in the field before mentioned.

The enemy's position was on the elevated ground just south of the ravine, their left resting on or a little west of the bridge on the Bayou Sara road, and their right extending east till about opposite the plantation bridge in the field, their artillery being close to the Bayou Sara road and about 200 or 300 yards south of the bridge.

Their position was an excellent one, especially so as they were protected and hidden from view by a growth of trees and under-brush.



Major Cook had a negro guide with him, who on entering the field showed him the plantation bridge, when the Major directed me, who was near him, to move rapidly with my company, dash across the bridge if possible, and be governed by circumstances after crossing. I galloped forward with my company, crossed the bridge, entered the timber and swung around the enemy's right flank, striking the Bayou Sara road about 300 yards in his rear. I was about to continue through an old field west of the road, when a man whom I left at the road for a moment, called me to come back, which I did by head of column right about, without slackening pace, and discovered the enemy trying to escape with their three pieces of artillery. I formed line at once, and as they were about to train their guns on me, I charged them with sabres and drove the gunners, drivers and all, from their guns and horses, all running in a northerly direction and right on to the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, which regiment was pressing them in front, and who captured them.

Captain Edland very soon came charging through the woods from the direction of the enemy's right flank, and while I was still confronting some of Gober's cavalry, reached the guns which I had just passed. Major Cook soon joined us at the guns, with the balance of the regiment.

I think Captain Edland escorted the guns from the field. It was a quick victory won by well directed dash and sharp fighting.

The force that went to the right, under Colonel Osband, encountered a small body of the enemy a few miles to the south, and quickly scattered it. After this fight, the command moved towards Fort Adams, and camped that night within a few miles of the last named place. On the morning of the 7th, the command marched back towards Woodville, but finding no enemy within striking distance, the column was headed in the direction of Natchez, where it arrived on the evening of the 8th.

There was a great deal of property captured, and between 50 and 60 prisoners taken, including Captain Holmes and the members of his battery, all of which were turned over to Colonel Kent, 29th Illinois Infantry, at Fort Adams, who took them to Natchez on the boat. (See reports of Gen. Dana, Col. Osband and Kent, of the Federal Army, and Gen. Hodge and Col. Gober,

of the Confederate Army in Records of War of rebellion, Serial No. 77.)

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Report of Col. Embury D. Osband, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Commanding Cavalry Forces.

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY FORCES,

*Vicksburg, Miss., September 26, 1864.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to report that in pursuance of orders from district headquarters I moved the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, 330 men, Major J. B. Cook commanding, at daylight on the 21st instant, to Haynes' Bluff, at which place they crossed the Yazoo River by the steamer White Cloud, marching 12 miles and encamping on the Hill place.

On the 22nd Major Cook attacked the commands of Bradford and Montgomery, about 150 strong, near Rolling Fork, and succeeded in driving them. He pursued them fifteen miles, when they crossed Sunflower river. He encamped at their camp on the Helen Johnson place. At 3 a. m. on the 23d instant he burned all the tenements, out-houses, stabling, gin-houses, etc. upon the premises, as ordered by district headquarters, destroying a large amount of ammunition, arms, and subsistence stores, hidden on the place.

About mid-day of the 23d he met Captain Sutton, commissary of subsistence C. S. Army, with twelve men, driving 300 head of cattle branded C. S. purchased for the use of the Confederate army. He killed 8 of the escort, and succeeded in taking the captain and 4 men prisoners.

Owing to the dense canebrake he was enabled to reach Egg Point with only about 200 of the cattle, which were turned over to Lieutenant-Colonel Sturdevant, chief commissary of subsistence, at this place as ordered. He also captured 18 horses and 19 mules, as appears by inclosed memorandum receipts, marked A.

On the 24th the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry met the Fifth Illinois Cavalry at William F. Smith's place, and with them proceeded to Vicksburg by steamer. The detachment of the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, 350 men, commanded by Major H. P. Mumford,

accompanied by me, proceeded on the night of the 21st by steamer B. J. Adams and barge to Bolivar Landing, reaching that place on the morning of the 23d at 9 a. m. Disembarking immediately, the command moved in the direction of Deer Creek, met no force of the enemy, but learned that a battery of artillery, supported by infantry and cavalry, was stationed at a point a few miles above, with intentions to fire upon transports.

Proceeding through the country, capturing 13 mules and 9 horses, as per memorandum receipts marked B., they succeeded in taking 3 of the enemy's most important scouts. Met the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry on the 24th at the Smith place. Returning to the river, which the command reached on the 26th, I immediately embarked, and reached this place at 4 p. m. 26th.

The result of the expedition may be summed up as follows: No losses upon our part. We had positive information of a loss of 15 killed on the rebel side, and 1 captain and 8 men taken prisoners. A list of their names is appended, marked C. We captured 27 horses, 32 mules, and about 200 cattle, as per memorandum receipts A. and B.

I found the inhabitants anxious for peace and willing to accept it under Federal rule. The State authorities are organizing the exempts under the militia law of the State, the Boliver county militia having already served the term of thirty days. The Washington County militia was to be organized on the 24th had not my forces been in the neighborhood.

The Issaquena County militia has not been ordered out, but will probably be as soon as the Washington County militia have served their term of thirty days.

Large amounts of corn has been raised by the planters on the entire routes of the expedition, and also a large quantity of cotton, the number of bales raised varying from 30 to 200 per plantation.

The Yazoo Swamps, under which term this part of the State of Mississippi is known, cannot be held except by at least 500 cavalry and would respectfully recommend that no supplies be landed to any one on the east side of the Mississippi, below Yazoo

Pass, because they either give voluntarily, or have taken from them by force, at least one half of all such supplies landed.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel, Commanding Cavalry Forces.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXIX, Part 1, Reports, pp. 571-2.)

Report of Col. Embury D. Osband, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Commanding expedition to Woodville.

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY FORCES,

*Vicksburg, Miss* October 12, 1864.

*Captain:*—Pursuant to orders from the major-general commanding, I left Natchez, Miss. on the 4th day of October, at 6 p. m. on transports provided, with detachments of the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, one section Twenty-sixth Ohio Battery and one section of Company K, Second Illinois Light Artillery, and a detachment of the signal corps, in all amounting to 1,200 men. I landed at Tunica Bend, La., at 4 a. m. on the 5th instant, and immediately marched in the direction of Woodville, Miss. When ten miles from Woodville, hearing heavy firing in the direction of Bayou Sara, I proceeded toward that point as far as Sligo, but there, finding that the firing receded faster than we advanced, I moved toward Woodville, and after surrounding the town, charged with two regiments, completely surprising the rebels and capturing 12 prisoners, 1 caisson, 12 army wagons with teams, etc. The Fifth Illinois Cavalry secured almost all of the above captures. Leaving a strong provost guard to search the town I moved, after destroying the telegraph and capturing the mail, half a mile south of the village and encamped the command.

At daylight I forwarded all prisoners and captured property to Fort Adams to meet the boats, and prepared to march. Hearing at this time of the position of a rebel force upon my right flank about one mile and a half distant, I immediately sent the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry and the sec-

tion of Company K, Second Illinois Light Artillery, to the left, and moved with the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry and Second Wisconsin Cavalry, and the section of the Twenty-sixth Ohio Battery to the right. The column sent to the left moved rapidly, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry in advance, and met a severe fire from Gober's Cavalry as the command rose the hill in rear of the rebel position. The artillery of the column, Fifth Illinois Cavalry supporting, opened at about 1,000 yards range, and did fine execution. Major J. B. Cook, with Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, pushing rapidly to the rear, stampeded Gober's command, and gained the rear of the battery, when, forming line of battle, he charged through the woods, one battalion with revolver and one with saber, cutting down the rebels, who were now deserting the battery, driving the gunners from and capturing the guns.

The batteryman rushing forward were secured as prisoners of war by the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, who were in line immediately in front. In the meantime the other column was met with stubborn resistance at the point where the railroad meets the road, and by the delay caused in dislodging this force only reached the scene of action in time to assist in securing the prisoners, who had scattered through the woods.

The results of this half-hour's work were one 12-pound howitzer, two 6-pound smooth-bore guns, 150 rounds of fixed ammunition, horses and harness complete, 3 battle-flags, 41 prisoners, and 40 of the enemy killed. Our loss was nothing.

The fight occurred near the residence of Judge McGehee, who had breakfast cooked for the rebels. Our men ate the breakfast without difficulty, and giving Judge McGehee half an hour to move out of his residence, burned it, together with the quarters he had erected for the use of the rebels. I now sent one company of the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, Captain Bentley commanding, to the right of our position about one mile, when he succeeded in stampeding one company of rebel cavalry. He found and destroyed 35 saddles and 35 stand of arms. I also caused to be burned at Woodville about \$100,000 worth of commissary stores, C. S. Army, consisting of salt, sugar, flour, tobacco and cotton cloth. I now moved rapidly to a point four miles from Fort Adams, sending captured property to the boats at that point in waiting. Here at the juncture of these roads the advance (Third

U. S. Colored Cavalry) found and drove some two miles a small party of rebels. Our loss was two wounded slightly. During the night I learned that we had met Powers' regiment, 200 strong. Before daylight, in attempting to surround them, our plan was accidently discovered and frustrated. The Fourth Illinois Cavalry had one man wounded, who afterward died.

Expecting to meet Scott's command and the combined rebel force at Woodville, I marched at 8 a. m. for that point, but found no enemy within twenty miles. Encamped on Buffalo Creek. Marched next morning at daylight, and meeting Colonel Farrar at Kingston reached Natchez at 4 p. m.

I regret to add that that gallant officer, Lieut. Col. Otto Funk commanding Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, while marching in column on this side of Woodville was painfully but not dangerously wounded by some bushwhackers concealed in the thick brush.

Embarking on transports the afternoon of the 9th I reached camp at Vicksburg the afternoon of the 11th instant.

I learned at Woodville that in the skirmish with Powers' regiment the enemy lost their commanding officer, Major McKowen, and 8 killed.

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#### A SUMMARY OF THE TWELVE DAYS SCOUT.

The command embarked and disembarked twice, traveled by river 175 miles, and marched by land 260 miles. They lost no material, had only 2 men killed and 1 officer and 5 men slightly wounded.

The enemy's loss in killed is Major McKowen, commanding Powers' regiment, C. S. Army, and Lieutenant Dodds, secret scout, C. S. Army, and 54 enlisted men; and by capture, 4 commissioned officers (Captain Holmes, the leader of the expedition, which recaptured the Chesapeake), the lieutenant and post commissary of subsistence at Woodville, a son of General Liddell, and an acting assistant surgeon, C. S. Army, and 82 enlisted men.

The command captured 3 pieces of cannon, 1 caisson, 350 rounds ammunition, harness, etc., 1,000 head of beef-cattle, 300 sheep, and between 300 and 400 horses and mules, 12 army

wagons, etc.; destroyed about 350 stand of small-arms, \$100,000 worth of subsistence stores, the telegraph station at Woodville, and a large portion of the line, the printing office at Woodville, and secured a large amount of information through captured dispatches, and otherwise valuable to the Government, and also gained 175 able-bodied colored recruits. The command returned in good health, and with a few days' rest are ready for another raid on the enemy.

I stated in a former report that I desired to prefer charges against Lieutenant Earl, commanding Major-General Canby's scouts; while I do not desire to again have him under my command, his gallant action in re-capturing the flags of our armies and sealed dispatches at Saint Joseph leads me to believe he is a valuable agent of the Government, and I would most respectfully decline to prosecute him for what I thought unofficial conduct.

Respectfully submitted,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

CAPT. F. W. FOX,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXIX, Part I, p. 831-2-3.

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Report of Major-General N. J. Dana, U. S. Army, commanding District of Vicksburg, including operations to October 11.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF VICKSBURG,

*Vicksburg, Miss., October 13, 1864.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to submit the following summary of recent active operations in this district, comprising a series of scouts or raids into the enemy's lines from Bolivar, on the Yazoo, to Tunica Bend, on the Mississippi (east side), a distance of 500 miles, and covering the period from 21st of September, the time of original departure from Vicksburg, to 11th of October, when the forces that were out on expedition returned to their camps. The cavalry forces which accomplished these operations were able to muster at the time of my assuming command here in the middle of August last only about 300 men effective for field service, but they moved in the recent expedition 1,100 strong.

On the 21st of September Col. E. D. Osband, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanding cavalry forces at this post, went out under my direction with detachments from his command, disposing of them as follows:

The battalion of Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, 330 strong, commanded by Maj. J. B. Cook, to march from here, with one piece of artillery, cross the Yazoo near Haynes Bluff, and beat up the country on Deer Creek as far as Egg Point. On the evening of the same day a battalion of the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, commanded by Maj. H. P. Mumford, to embark from here, with orders to land at Bolivar, about 200 miles above here, and move down Deer Creek to meet the first detachment at Egg Point. These movements were made as desired, and the expedition was successful. On the 22d, Cook attacked the commands of Bradford and Montgomery, numbering 150 men, near Rolling Fork, routed and pursued them for fifteen miles, till they crossed the Sunflower.

He occupied their camp at the Helen Johnson place; found there a large quantity of ammunition, some arms, and subsistence stores, and as they were concealed in the houses he burned the whole establishment.

On the 23d he met Captain Sutton, a rebel commissary, with twelve men, driving 300 head of cattle branded C. S. He killed eight of the escort and captured the captain and the remaining four men, with the cattle.

Owing to the dense canebrake he succeeded in bringing home only 200 of the cattle. The expedition arrived here from Egg Point on the night of the 26th, bringing 27 horses, 32 mules, and 200 head of cattle; also one captain and eight men as prisoners. The loss of the enemy was 15 killed; no loss on our side.

On the night of the 29th of September the cavalry forces were again embarked, and left here to operate in the vicinity of Port Gibson, Miss.

The command numbered about 1,100 men, under Colonel Osband, and was composed of detachments from the following regiments, viz.: Second Wisconsin Cavalry, Fifth Illinois Cavalry, Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, detachment with four guns from Twenty-sixth Ohio Battery



Light Artillery, and detachment of signal corps. At the same time an infantry force was embarked, under command of Col. Charles A. Gilchrist, Fiftieth U. S. Colored Infantry, 525 strong, and composed of detachments from various regiments, as follows: 300 men from Fiftieth U. S. Colored Infantry, 200 men from Forty-eighth U. S. Colored Infantry, 25 men from Fifth U. S. Colored Infantry, with two pieces of artillery. Colonel Osband debarked at Bruinsburg on the morning of the 30th, and at once moved on to Port Gibson, while Colonel Gilchrist passed on, debarked, and awaited Colonel Osband at Rodney.

In the afternoon our forces found at Port Gibson thirty of Cobb's Black River Scouts and drove them, killing two men and three horses, and losing one man killed. Colonel Osband, under my orders, arrested at this place 13 of the most prominent and wealthy citizens to be held as hostages.

The next morning, October 1, he marched to Rodney, reaching that place at 4 p. m., and then transferred to Colonel Gilchrist, commanding the infantry forces, about 125 head of cattle, 60 mules, and the prisoners before mentioned. Colonel Gilchrist embarked his command, the property he had received from Colonel Osband and that which his own command had collected, and was on his way up river at sunset, reaching Vicksburg in the forenoon on the 2d instant. At 4 a. m. on the 2d instant Colonel Osband moved toward Fayette, reaching that place at noon. There were here captured and destroyed between 75 and 100 stand of arms. During the day, as the advance (the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Cook) neared Cole's Creek, they discovered and chased seven members of Captain Ruth's command, killing one, mortally wounding one, and capturing the remaining five. On the 3d the command moved again at daylight, reaching Natchez at 10 p. m. By the way, the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, Major Dale commanding, was sent out on one flank, and the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry on the other. Major Dale's force, numbering about 180 men, encountered about 200 of the enemy's forces, under Captain Boyd, about fifteen miles from Natchez. In the engagement which ensued seven of the enemy were killed, as our forces discovered in passing over the field. The loss on our side was two men slightly wounded.

Colonel Osband turned over to the proper officers at Natchez,

as the result of the expedition, 350 head of cattle, 125 head of sheep, 19 mules, and three horses. By so much continuous service the cavalry was much worn, and it was necessary to shoe about 350 of the horses, for which purpose all the private as well as Government blacksmith shops at Natchez were at once employed. The sick, worn-out, and disabled men and horses were immediately sent to Vicksburg.

With a view to further operations beyond and below Natchez, I deemed it advisable that I should be at that post to organize the contemplated expeditions, and accordingly reached there on the 1st instant.

It had been intended that the cavalry forces should embark at Natches on the evening of the 2d, but being unexpectedly detained by engagements with the enemy they could not move in time to receive the benefit of the co-operative movement toward Clinton, which, at my request, was made by Brigadier-General Lawler from Morganza, on the 3d instant.

On the 4th the following arrangements were made: Colonel Osband with his original force, and in addition a detachment of Fourth Illinois Cavalry (stationed at Natchez), making in all about 1,200 men, to embark on transports in the evening and proceed to Tunica Bend, 110 miles down the river, then debarking at daylight on the 5th to proceed at once to Woodville and beyond; the Twenty-ninth Illinois Infantry, Col. L. Kent, stationed at Natchez, about 500 strong, to embark also and land at Tunica Bend and march across the peninsula to Fort Adams, there to await Colonel Osband; Col. B. G. Farrar, Sixth U. S. Colored Artillery (heavy), with 1,000 infantry detailed from Brigadier-General Brayman's command at post of Natchez, to proceed to Havard's Ferry on Homochitto River, twenty-six miles from Natchez, there to await the cavalry forces on their return toward Natchez.

The reports of the subordinate commanders, herewith transmitted, show how satisfactorily these operations were executed.

I notified General Lawler of the delay in my operations, and on the 5th he again threw out a force in the direction of Clinton.

Our forces found a body of the enemy at Woodville on the morning of the 6th instant, surprised and partially surrounded them, and after a short engagement routed them, with a loss

to the enemy of 40 killed and 41 captured, including one captain and one lieutenant; also captured three pieces of artillery, horses and harnesses. The loss on our side was nothing.

Woodville was then occupied, and there were captured and destroyed there 35 stand of arms, 35 saddles, \$100,000 worth of commissary and quartermaster's stores of the rebel Government, consisting of salt, sugar, flour, tobacco, cotton cloth, &c.; also were captured a rebel telegraph office, with instruments complete, and much mail matter.

Our force moved in the evening of the 6th to the junction of the Pinckneyville and Woodville roads, four miles from Fort Adams, where the prisoners and captured property were turned over to Colonel Kent, commanding Twenty-ninth Illinois Infantry.

Expecting to meet Colonel Scott's (rebel) forces at Woodville, Col. Osband reoccupied that place the next morning. There was some skirmishing, and one man killed on our side, but the enemy was not found to be in force anywhere in the vicinity. On the 8th he marched from Buffalo Creek, where he had encamped, meeting Colonel Farrar at Kingston and reaching Natchez in the afternoon. On the march beyond Woodville, Lieutenant-Colonel Otto Funk, Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, was painfully, but not dangerously, wounded by some bushwhackers concealed in the thick brush near the road.

It has subsequently appeared that in the skirmish of the morning of the 7th our forces had met Power's regiment (rebel) 200 strong, and killed the commanding officer, Major McKowen, and eight men.

Colonel Kent, marching from Tunica, via Pinckneyville, reached Fort Adams, eighteen miles, on the evening of the 5th. The transports were ordered to await him at that point, and when he had embarked the prisoners and property received from the cavalry, as well as that which he had himself collected, and had for prudential reasons delayed till the morning of the 8th, he returned to Natchez. I approved his course in tarrying at Fort Adams, as it was not certain what might be the result of Colonel Osband's operations.

Colonel Kent reports no occurrence of importance on his march, having seen only small parties of the enemy on the march and during his stay at Fort Adams, (I had directed

twenty-four hours' delay there for the purpose), he collected a considerable amount of property, and there came to him 215 contrabands of all ages and sexes. He turned over to the proper officers at Natchez, including the property which the cavalry had captured, 24 horses, 73 serviceable mules, 330 beef-cattle, 46 bales of cotton, and six wagons, readily convertible into army wagons.

Colonel Farrar's official report has not yet been received, but I believe there was nothing worthy of reporting in his operations, except that he received about 300 cattle. He returned to Natchez immediately upon meeting Colonel Osband at Kingston.

In all these operations 185 negro recruits were added to our colored forces.

I have the honor to be, colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. J. T. DANA,  
*Major-General.*

LIEUT.-COL. C. T. CHRISTENSEN,  
*Asst. Adjt.-Gen., Military Division of West Mississippi.*  
Rebellion Records, Vol. XXXIX, Part 1, p. 568-571.

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ADDENDA.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF VICKSBURG,

*Vicksburg, Miss., October 12, 1864.*

*General Orders No. 60.*

It is the pleasant duty of the Major-General commanding to make acknowledgement of the very creditable service of the cavalry of this command during their late operations, which have resulted in killing upward of 70 of the enemy, capturing the same number, with a battery of light artillery, two mails and a telegraph office, destroying a large amount of subsistence stores, small-arms and ammunition, besides bringing in about 1,000 head of cattle, 300 valuable mules, and many horses. These operations have extended over 500 miles, and it is very gratifying that no robbery or marauding has been complained of. The improved discipline of the regiments reflect credit on the

officers and will always be a matter of pride with every man belonging to the brigade, as that improves their endurance and the efficiency of the mounts increases, and with these results the weight and shock of the charge. Let all officers and men now apply themselves strictly to instruction and discipline. Let no officer be absent from water and stable calls.

Look well to the health of the soldier and to the condition of his best friend—his horse—and let us be ready for the operations of an early day.

*By order of Maj.--Gen. N. J. T. Dana.*

F. W. Fox,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE THIRD U. S. COLORED CAVALRY THROWN INTO THE BREACH—

#### THE CAPTURE AND BURNING OF THE RAILROAD BRIDGE OVER BIG BLACK RIVER, NOVEMBER 27, 1864.

On the morning of November 23, 1864, a large cavalry force left Vicksburg. This force was commanded by Brevet Brigadier-General, E. D. Osband, and was composed of the following troops: Fifth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, the former commanded by Colonel McConnell, and the latter by Major Burbridge, the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, commanded by Major Dale, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanded by Major J. B. Cook, and the Fifth U. S. Artillery, colored, eight guns, a pontoon train also accompanied the command.

The ostensible object of this expedition was a move on Jackson, Miss., but the real intention was the capture and destruction of the railroad bridge over the Big Black.

In July preceding this movement an expedition had been sent out from Vicksburg to occupy Jackson. The Confederate sympathizers in Vicksburg found means to communicate the information to the rebel General Wirt Adams, who commanded a division of cavalry, with headquarters at Jackson.

General Adams' forces consisted of five brigades of cavalry, 6,000 or 7,000 men, scattered from Grenada on the north, to

Natchez on the south, which forces at this time, November 23d, occupied about the same relative positions as on the previous occasion. General Adams was duly informed of the object of this expedition, no attempt having been made to keep it secret.

On the 23d the command marched to Black River, put down the pontoon, when the Second Wisconsin and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry were ordered to cross over and make a reconnoissance or demonstration towards Jackson. This force went as far as Baker's Creek where they camped and started fires all along Champion Hills, the old battle ground. Before midnight, however the reconnoitering force quietly withdrew, leaving the fires burning brightly and rejoined the main command on the west side of Black river.

In the meantime General Adams was being informed by his scouts and couriers of the advance of the Union forces on Jackson, and all night the wires were kept hot with messages sent out from Jackson by General Adams to his scattered troops, ordering them to march day and night to the defense of Jackson. At an early hour on the morning of the 24th, the whole command, except the artillery, which was left to guard the pontoon bridge, crossed the river and moved rapidly up the east side, while the rebel forces were moving for the defense of Jackson. Keeping on toward Benton, the command camped that night at Wesley Chapel. Moving on the morning of the 26th, the command proceeded to within a few miles of Benton, and meeting no enemy, camped near Deasonville. On the morning of the 27th, marched at daylight, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry having the advance, cut telegraph wires beyond Deasonville and burned Vaughan Station and cut the wires at that place.

The railroad bridge over Big Black river was situated four miles below Vaughan Station. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Cook commanding, was sent to destroy the bridge. This bridge was situated in an almost impenetrable swamp, and was inaccessible except over the narrow railroad track, which was broken at intervals by open trestle-work. From the nature of things the use of artillery was impracticable, leaving no alternative but a direct charge over the railroad ties and trestle-work.

The bridge was defended by a large force of infantry, at least one regiment, who were strongly posted in stockades on both

sides of the river, and from which they could concentrate a deadly fire on the bridge and its approaches without exposing themselves to danger. The position was considered well nigh impregnable. Two previous attempts by some of the best troops in the department had failed to dislodge the enemy and destroy the bridge.

That these assaults had been desperately maintained and the bridge heroically defended, its blackened and bullet-torn timbers attested.

It was at a time when the rebel General Hood was concentrating his army for an attack on Nashville. His means of obtaining supplies and re-enforcements must be cut off, to effect which the railroad bridge over Big Black must be destroyed. From the previous vain attempts to dislodge the enemy from his strongly intrenched position, it was well known to the district commander that the bridge could only be taken by the most determined bravery and the sacrifice of many lives. It was not so much a question of numbers to be brought into action as it was of the dash and mettle of those engaged.

It may therefore be considered as a high compliment to the officers and men of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry that they were selected to lead the assault. The regiment was dismounted a mile or more from the bridge, that being as close as a mounted force could approach it. One man in every set of fours was left to hold horses. The following disposition of the forces for the assault was made: Major Cook proceeded along the railroad track with a few men to attract the attention of the enemy, while the balance of the force, about equally divided, moved through the swamp under Major Main and Captain Emery, Major Main on the right and Captain Emery on the left of the railroad. The ground was boggy and covered with a heavy growth of timber, vines and brambles. The men waded waist deep in mud and water a great part of the distance, which rendered progress extremely slow and tedious, and some time before they reached the bridge, the force under Major Cook attracted the attention of the enemy, who opened fire, but Major Cook kept his men at long range, alternately advancing and falling back, which had the desired effect of drawing the rebels out of their stockade. In the meantime the detachments under Major Main and Captain Emery crept closer and closer until they gained a position close to the bank of the river and near the bridge from which point,

screened by the thick under-brush, they delivered a very effective cross fire. The rebels, thinking that the force in view on the railroad was all they had to contend with, came out of the stockade and formed along the bank of the river, seemingly enjoying the sport of shooting at Yankees, when the detachments under Major Main and Captain Emery, at the blast of the bugle, that being the prearranged signal, simultaneously opened fire. To say that the rebels were surprised would not express it. If a thunder-bolt had cleft the earth at their feet they could not have been more dumbfounded. For a moment they seemed stunned, not knowing what to do or which way to go, but when they regained their senses they lost no time in getting back inside the stockade. There was, however, no cessation in the firing from start to finish. Twenty carbines covered every port-hole in the stockade, rendering it extremely dangerous for the rebels to return the fire.

During this terrible bombardment a charging party crossed the bridge, the men jumping from tie to tie and from stringer to stringer.

At the stockade a hand to hand fight ensued, the black troopers, led by their white officers, swarmed through the sally ports of the stockade, driving the rebels from their position, who retreated back into the woods, from which place they kept up a scattering fire during the destruction of the bridge. One company carried a large supply of coal oil in canteens, with which the frame-work of the bridge was well saturated. Brush and such material as could be found at hand was brought and piled on the bridge in great quantities, when the fire was applied to it. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry never did anything by halves, and the bridge was utterly and irretrievably destroyed before they left it. After the destruction of the bridge, the whole regiment returned on the railroad track, tearing it up as they went. With the combined strength of 500 men the track was lifted bodily, ties and all, and rolled down the embankment, when once in motion the momentum was almost sufficient to keep it going. Thus long stretches of track could be quickly destroyed. This mode of tearing up railroads originated with the officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and they became experts at it.

The conduct of the regiment on this occasion was most favorably mentioned in general orders No. 81, Headquarters



Military Division of West Mississippi, December 9, 1864, and in General Orders No. 303, War Department, Washington, December 22, 1864. (See General Canby's report).

On the 28th, the command was engaged in scouting by detachments, destroying railroads and Confederate property, cotton & etc.

On the 29th the command reached Yazoo City and camped. The pickets had hardly been posted when they were attacked, showing that the enemy were in close proximity. On the 30th the command remained in camp to rest the horses, frequent attacks on the pickets being made.

On the morning of December 1st, at an early hour detachments were sent out on all the roads to feel for the enemy. Colonel Dale, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, commanding the force sent out on the Vicksburg road encountered the enemy in large force, and was driven back after a hot fight, sustaining a loss of thirty men killed, wounded and taken prisoners, Colonel Dale being among the wounded. The enemy were found on all the roads leading into the city.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was sent out on the road running up the river, or north from the city, where they encountered a considerable force of the enemy, with whom they had a spirited skirmish, repulsing the enemy and sustaining no loss. It having been ascertained that the enemy were closing in around the city on the northeast and south and that they were in heavy force on the Vicksburg road, where they had artillery, it was deemed unwise to risk a battle, particularly as the command was running short of ammunition, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry alone having fired 10,000 rounds in the fight at the railroad bridge. It was therefore decided to transfer the command to the west side of the Yazoo river, and at 4 p. m., the work of ferrying the command over was commenced, the work continuing without interruption until 8 a. m. the next morning, when the last boat load was landed on the west bank.

In the mean time, to cover this movement, our pickets were pushed well out, showing the enemy a bold front, the command being withdrawn company by company. The only means of crossing the river was by a small flat-boat, twelve horses and men being a load. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was the last

regiment to cross, they being kept well to the front and constantly engaged in skirmishing with the enemy, who seeing that our lines were being weakened pressed forward with great energy, forcing the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry back to the water's edge, where under the guns of our men on the opposite bank they were able to effect a crossing, though under a galling fire.

The crossing was effected without serious loss, and the command moved down along the west bank of the river to the mouth of Sunflower river, a tributary of the Yazoo, where it camped until boats arrived from Vicksburg.

The Steamer Shenango and Gunboat Prairie Bird were in the river, having been sent up from Vicksburg with supplies for the command. The sick and wounded were sent to Vicksburg on the steamer, conveyed by the gunboat.

Major Cook, with the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry and Second Wisconsin Cavalry and four pieces of artillery, was the last to leave the camp at the mouth of the Sunflower river, Colonel Osband with the balance of the command having embarked previously. In the meantime the enemy were moving down along the east bank of the Yazoo. The country on the west side of the Yazoo is low and swampy, while on the east side it is hilly, often rising in bluffs to considerable height, which were covered with a growth of scrubby trees and bushes, offering positions of great advantage for a concealed enemy.

The rebels availing themselves of these advantages, occupied positions in the bluffs below the mouth of the Sunflower, where they lay in wait for the transports carrying Major Cook's command.

A few days after the departure of Colonel Osband, three transports and the gunboat Prairie Bird came up the river for the troops left under the command of Major Cook.

The troops were soon embarked, when the transports started down the river under convoy of the gunboat. Small squads of the enemy soon made their appearance on the east bank; they were mounted and kept well out of range, but their presence portended trouble. The four pieces of artillery were placed in position on the port side of the boat, facing the bluffs, and the troops were disposed of in the best manner for the defense of the boat and their own protection, being placed behind hastily

constructed barricades of wood, boxes, and such material as could be found on the boat.

When seven or eight miles from the starting point, and opposite some bluffs, the enemy opened fire with artillery and small arms. The river at this point was quite narrow, not more than one hundred yards in width, which brought the boats within close range of the enemy. The gunboat could only return the fire with her port guns, which, however, were well served and being double shotted with grape and canister, must have done great execution.

Running the line of fire the gunboat doubled on her course, and running back, brought her starboard and bow guns into action.

As the transports came within the line of fire their four pieces of artillery opened fire, raking the bluffs, and a thousand carbines sent a storm of bullets into every thicket along the face of the bluffs.

Thus for a mile or more the boats were under fire. Except a few men wounded, caused mostly by flying splinters, no loss was sustained.

The upper works of the transports were pretty well shot away.

The command reached Vicksburg without further incident, where it was received with manifestations of joy and praise for the success achieved.

The newspapers throughout the country mentioned the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry in the highest terms for their heroism in the capture of the bridge over Big Black.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

Reports of Colonel E. D. Osband, General N. J. T. Dana, and General E. R. S. Canby, also General Orders No. 303, War Department, and General Orders No. 81, Military Division of West Mississippi.

REPORT OF COL. E. D. OSBAND, COMMANDING EXPEDITION.

HEADQUARTERS EXPEDITION,

*Yazoo City, December 1, 1864.*

*Captain*—I have the honor to report that I burned the railroad bridge on Sunday last (November 27), and thirty miles of railroad on Monday, and reached here without serious loss on the 29th, at 1 p. m. I rested yesterday, but still find my stock much disabled.

Hearing rumors of the concentration of the enemy for my capture, I sent this morning detachments on each road, all of which found some portions of the enemy. The Second Wisconsin, 250 strong, found about 1,500 of the enemy, part cavalry and part infantry; no artillery was used, but I know they have four batteries. From twenty-five to fifty of the Second Wisconsin were killed, wounded and missing. Major Dale was severely wounded in the ankle.

At four p. m., judging that with so large a force in my front I could not move to Vicksburg on this side the river, I commenced crossing to the other side. I judge that I shall have my command in the saddle on the west bank of the Yazoo river by 3 a. m. to-morrow, and expect to reach the mouth of the Big Sunflower by noon to-morrow. I desire you to send to me at that point transports sufficient for my command and the gunboat *Indicator*, although transports unattended can come with safety to this point. I anticipate no trouble here to-night, and believe I can make the movement successfully without loss. I am compelled to send the *Shenango* with sick and wounded, although the rebels may have batteries at Liverpool and Satartia. The *Prairie Bird* will assist her as much as possible. I believe the present movement of the Confederate forces quite formidable, and may have Vicksburg in view, although the destruction of the railroad will prevent rapid movements for some days.

Almost all of these troops operating against me came over the railroad from Grenada, and perhaps higher up.

I trust the transports will be sent immediately, as I have no rations.

Respectfully,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel, Commanding Expedition.*

One of the transports should bring me 10,000 rations and four day's forage for 2,200 men and 2,500 horses and mules, unless transports enough to take the whole command are sent, when the forage will not be needed.

Respectfully,

E. D. OSBAND,  
*Colonel, etc.*

CAPTAIN F. W. FOX,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol, XLV, Part 1. p 780-81.)

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SECOND REPORT.

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY FORCES.

*Vicksburg, Miss, December 4, 1864.*

*Captain*—I have the honor to report that, pursuant to orders of the major-general commanding, I moved with my command to Big Black railroad bridge on the morning of the 23d of November. Desiring to make a feint of attack on Jackson, Miss. the pontoon bridge was laid on the morning of the 24th, and a scout of two regiments was sent out under Major N. H. Dale, Second Wisconsin Cavalry Volunteers, who proceeded to Baker's Creek, meeting no force of the enemy. On the 25th of November, leaving the pontoon bridge in charge of the Fifth U. S. Colored Artillery (heavy), the command moved towards Benton and camped at Wesley Chapel, moving on the 26th of November, to within three miles of Benton, and still found no enemy.

On the morning of the 27th of November, we marched at daylight, and the advance of a column under Major Cook, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, cut the telegraph on the railroad beyond Deasonville, and in sight of Vaughn Station, at 12-30 p. m.

The railroad bridge across Big Black lay four miles below, without any approach save the railroad track, and artillery could not be taken to it.

Other expeditions had attempted to burn it, and failed.

Since the attempt of General McArthur last May it had been

strengthened by a stockade this side the river, the approach to which was over the railroad trestle-work, twenty-five feet high.

I sent the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major J. B. Cook commanding, to burn it.

He advanced his men dismounted, down the track, with one company preceding him on each flank in the swamp below.

When some distance from the bridge the skirmishing became warm, and the bank of the river and the recently erected stockade were carried with some difficulty.

Repeated volleys at thirty yards range failing to dislodge them from the stockade on the other side of the river, Major Cook formed three companies on the trestle-work, and with only the railroad ties for a path, charged and carried the stockade under a heavy fire, the enemy only retiring when his advance was literally inside the stockade.

Being heavily re-enforced from Way's Bluff Station, one mile distant, the Confederates attempted to regain their lost ground, and failed.

When brush and dry trees had been gathered sufficient to burn the heavy timbers, the long trestle-work beyond the bridge, and the half mile on this side, were fired, the wind favoring, the whole of the trestle-work and the major part of the bridge were consumed, repeated volleys from our men keeping the rebels from interference. The rebels left three dead, \*our loss three wounded. In the meantime the balance of the men had not been idle.

The Fifth Illinois Cavalry, Col. John McConnell commanding, tore up and burned one mile of track, bending every rail and throwing away the chairs.

The Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Major Burbridge commanding, tore up one mile and a half of track, burning and bending every rail. They also burned railroad buildings at Vaughn Station, \$166,000 worth of railroad supplies (as per bills), 100 bales C. S. A. cotton, 20 barrels salt, 4 stage coaches, large piles of grain, etc. On Monday, the 29th, Major Burbridge proceeded to Pickett Station, burning all trestle work, railroad buildings, 1,200 bales C. S. A. cotton, together with large amounts of wheat and corn. The command moved toward Goodman, burning long lines of high and important trestle-work.

When two miles from Goodman, I sent forward the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, and Fifth Illinois Cavalry, under Col. John McConnell, to burn railroad there.

\* It was subsequently learned that the enemy lost 10 killed and many wounded.—Author.

One battalion, Fifth Illinois Cavalry, under Colonel McConnell's orders, proceeded to wagon road bridge over Big Black, and although meeting fully their number of Confederates, drove them across the bridge and burned it.

Colonel McConnell burned railroad buildings at Goodman, 1,300 bales C. S. A. cotton, large amounts of corn and wheat, 2 engines and four cars.

The railroad is destroyed for thirty miles and cannot be repaired by the Confederates in two months with any force at their command. The importance of this must be apparent. The Black river Valley groans with its weight of corn, wheat, cattle, and hogs.

The railroad was finished to Jackson, Tenn., and supplies were being hurried to Hood's army. Three trains of infantry were sent to the relief of Jackson the night preceding the one in which the bridge was burnt, who will now be compelled either to walk back or wait.

On the 29th of November, retracing our steps, we occupied Yazoo City at 1 p. m., our pickets being strongly attacked a few hours later.

It is probable that the city would have been occupied by the enemy had we not taken possession as we did.

The 30th was given to resting our tired horses.

Rumors coming of an advance of the enemy, our lines were strengthened. So numerous became these rumors that the orders to march out at daylight of the 1st December was countermanded, and instead scouting parties sent out on all the roads for information. The enemy were found on each road in more or less force, but strongest on the Vicksburg road, on which I had sent Maj. N. H. Dale with 250 men of the Second Wisconsin Cavalry. He moved at daylight, and driving before him a few of the enemy passed the junction of the Yazoo City and Benton roads. Here, at some negro quarters, some strength was shown by the enemy, and two companies were dismounted to dislodge

them. Finding these about to be flanked, two other companies were dismounted and sent to their assistance. Just beyond these quarters a dense undergrowth of scrub oak commenced, and when the enemy were driven back to this, they appeared in great numbers, and suddenly charging our men, drove them, capturing a part of Company E, Second Wisconsin Cavalry. Major Dale being previously wounded in the ankle, fainted from loss of blood and pain, but despite this, the detachment reformed and twice repulsed the charges made upon them, with loss to the enemy.

The command was withdrawn without confusion. Careful officers estimate the number of the enemy at from 1,500 to 3,000 men, and their loss at 75 men killed and wounded. Our loss was 5 enlisted men killed, 1 commissioned officer wounded, 8 enlisted men wounded, 1 commissioned officer missing, 24 enlisted men missing. From the fact that a portion of this force was infantry, that they occupied a very strong position, that lay directly in my road, and that I could not flank because they used no artillery, although having plenty, I determined I ought not to risk defeat without a base to fall back upon, or supplies of any kind in case delayed, and therefore commenced crossing the Yazoo River with my command at 4 p. m. At 8 p. m. of the 2d we finished crossing, in safety, and moved to the mouth of the Big Sunflower, where they now await transportation to this city. The Shenango was fired into at Short Creek, and one enlisted man of the Fifth Illinois Cavalry was severely wounded. I desire to return my thanks to Captain Gorringer, of the Vindicator; Captain Burns, of the Prairie Bird, and each commanding officer of each regiment and battery, for their full co-operation and cheerful and prompt obedience to all orders issued.

During the entire march the most perfect order has been maintained, winning even from the confederate citizens encomiums on our discipline.

The men returned in excellent health, but many valuable horses are broken down.

The loss of hay for three months past is painfully apparent, and many valuable animals have been lost on account of their diseased condition caused by lack of hay. Hay at any price



is economy to the Government, and adds to our efficiency fully one-third to one-half.

I am, captain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel Third U. S.*

*Colored Cavalry.*

*Commanding Cavalry Forces, District of Vicksburg.*

CAPT. F. W. FOX,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

Rebellion Records, Vol. XLV, Part 1, p. 781, 782, 783.

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REPORT OF MAJ. GEN. NAPOLEON J. T. DANA, U. S. ARMY.  
COMMANDING DISTRICT OF WEST TENNESSEE AND  
VICKSBURG.

*Headquarters District of  
West Tennessee and Vicksburg,  
Vicksburg, December 4, 1864.*

Sir:—I have the honor to transmit herewith the reports of Col. E. D. Osband, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanding Cavalry Forces, District of Vicksburg, of the cavalry expeditions sent by me from Vicksburg on the 23d ultimo, as projected in my letter to Brig. Gen. J. W. Davidson, chief of cavalry Military Division of West Mississippi, of 18th ultimo, and my letter to you of 22d ultimo. Leaving Vicksburg at daylight on November 23d, the expedition, consisting of 2,200 cavalry, eight pieces of artillery, and a pontoon train, arrived at Big Black River at 1 p. m. same day and laid the pontoon bridge over the Big Black. On the 24th the Eleventh Illinois and Second Wisconsin Cavalry, Maj. Dale, Second Wisconsin, commanding, crossed and proceeded scouting toward Jackson, returning and recrossing at night without meeting the enemy, although subsequent information satisfies me that some 3,000 of the enemy were in line of battle on the Jackson road to contest the advance.

The bridge was taken up, started back to Vicksburg under escort, and the column moved toward Yazoo City on the morning of the 25th, marching thirty-seven miles that day, bivouacking

near Mechanicsburg; marched thirty-six miles on 26th, bivouac-ing near Benton; struck the Big Black bridge on the 27th, and reached Yazoo City on the 29th. The last of the troops returned to Vicksburg to-night, December 4. The entire plan, as detailed by me to yourself and General Davidson, was completely carried out by Colonel Osband, completely deceiving the enemy, and the expedition was a signal success; he brings back more recruits than his entire loss in effective force, and reports the destruction of the very important long railroad bridge and trestle at the crossing of the Mississippi Central railroad over the Big Black River, near Canton, Miss.; thus cutting off the supplies and stores accumulated at Jackson, Miss, from Hood's army, and severing railroad communication between Corinth, Jackson, Meridian, and Mobile; this—together with the burning of piles and storehouses full of corn and grain, and 30 miles track, wagon road bridge over Big Black, Vaughn Station (railroad depot and buildings), Picket Station (railroad depot and buildings), Goodman Station (railroad depot and buildings), 2,600 bales C. S. cotton, 2 locomotives, 4 cars, 4 stage coaches, 20 barrels salt, \$166,000 worth of stores at Vaughn Station—makes it one of the heaviest blows dealt the rebellion, as it directly affects the efficiency of Hood's army now on the Tennessee River, dependent on this railroad and these supplies.

Information just received from a deserter shows that there were at least two brigades of cavalry and one brigade of infantry closing in on Colonel Osband at Yazoo City, thus confirming his impression of the superiority of the rebel forces.

Requesting that Colonel Osband's well-deserved mention of officers and commands may receive the attention of the Major-General commanding division,

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. J. T. DANA,

*Major-General.*

I cannot close this report without calling attention to Maj. J. B. Cook, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, for some time past in command of the regiment. The intelligence, industry, and devotion to the service, with the long list of gallant deeds constantly enacted by Major Cook, entitle him to consideration,

while in my judgment the best interests of the service demand his rapid advancement. The charge over the railroad trestle-work and bridge by dismounted cavalry, led by Major Cook, was one of the most dashing and heroic acts of the war.

As an act of simple justice, I recommend his promotion to the lieutenant-colonelcy of his regiment now vacant.

N. J. T. DANA,

*Major-General.*

LIEUT. COL. C. T. CRISTENSEN,

*Asst. Adjt. Gen. Hdqrs. Mil. Div. W. Miss., New Orleans, La.*

Report of Maj. Gen. Edward R. S. Canby, U. S. Army,  
Commanding Military Division of West Mississippi.

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HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION  
OF WEST MISSISSIPPI.

*New Orleans, La., December 9, 1864.*

On the 25th ultimo I reported that movements co-operative with General Sherman's operations would be made from Vicksburg and Baton Rouge for the purpose of cutting Hood's communications with Mobile. The expedition sent from Vicksburg, and consisting of about 2,000 cavalry and 8 pieces of artillery, commanded by Col. E. D. Osband, Third Colored Cavalry, returned on the 4th instant, having met with a complete success. After an admirably executed feint movement on Jackson on the 24th, the expedition started for Big Black bridge, on the Mississippi Central Railroad, which was reached on the 27th, and after a stubborn resistance captured and destroyed.

This cuts Hood's army off from the large quantities of supplies and stores accumulated at Jackson, Miss., and makes that railroad, which was his main reliance, unavailable to him for months to come. Besides this important bridge and trestle-work, the following property was completely destroyed: 30 miles of track, wagon bridge over Big Black, Vaughn, Pickett and Goodman Stations (railroad depots and buildings), 2,600 bales C. S. cotton, 2 locomotives, 4 cars, 4 stage coaches, 20 barrels salt, \$166,000 worth of stores at Vaughn Station. The

expedition was considerably harrassed on its return by large bodies of the enemy's troops, but suffered no material losses, and brought back more recruits than the entire loss in effective men.

Major J. B. Cook, commanding the Third Colored Cavalry, distinguished himself and his regiment greatly by the gallantry with which the force guarding the Big Black bridge were driven off from behind their strong stockade on the opposite side of the river. Our men had to charge across the bridge dismounted, with nothing but railroad ties for a path, and in the face of a sharp fire.

I have announced Major Cook, in general orders, as promoted to the vacant lieutenant-colonelcy of the regiment, subject to the approval of the President.

General Davidson's expedition, which left Baton Rouge on the 27th has not yet been heard from directly, but to judge from the meager accounts received through rebel sources, I have reason to believe that he has been successful. He had caused quite a panic in Mobile, and was reported as devastating the country generally. After accomplishing the purpose for which he was sent, he will probably come out at Pascagoula or some other point of the gulf.

Lieutenant Earl, commanding a special party of scouts, and whom I recently recommended for promotion by brevet, has, I regret to say, fallen into the hands of the enemy. On the 30th of November, while passing through Fayette, Miss., on an expedition to co-operate with Generals Dana and Davidson, he was fired upon from a house in the town and wounded severely in the face and breast. His case was so critical that he would not let his men take him away, and the rebels have since moved him into the interior. If he survives I shall use every exertion to have him exchanged at an early day.

E. R. S. CANBY,

*Major General Commanding.*

MAJ. GEN H. W. HALLECK,

*Chief of Staff of the Army, Washington, D. C.*

ADDENDA.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE.

*Washington, December 22, 1864*

GENERAL ORDERS,

No 303.

The following General Orders, No. 81, from the headquarters Military Division of West Mississippi, is approved by the President of the United States.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION,  
OF WEST MISSISSIPPI.

*New Orleans, La., December 9, 1864.*

GENERAL ORDERS,

No. 81.

Subject to the approval of the President of the United States Major J. B. Cook, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, is hereby promoted to the lieutenant-Colonelcy of that regiment, to date from the 27th of November, 1864, in consideration of the gallantry displayed by him on that day, when, with his men dismounted and having nothing but railroad ties for a path, he charged over the Big Black bridge, near Canton, Miss., in the face of a heavy fire, drove off the rebel force stationed on the opposite shore behind a strong stockade, and destroyed the bridge, by which the main line of the rebel General Hood's communications with his depots in South Mississippi and Alabama were effectually cut off. The major-general commanding the Districts of West Tennessee and Vicksburg styles this affair as "*one of the most daring and heroic acts of the war.*"

By order of

MAJ. GEN. E. R. S. CANBY,

C. T. CHRISTENSEN,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

By order of the Secretary of War.

(R. R. Vol. XLV, Part 1, p 778.)

E. D. TOWNSEND,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

## ADDENDA.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

*Memphis, Tenn., December 21, 1864.*

GENERAL ORDERS,

No. 6.

The following communication from the general commanding Military Division of West Mississippi is published for the information of this command;

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION,  
OF WEST MISSISSIPPI.

*New Orleans, La., December 9, 1864*

MAJ. GEN. N. J. T. DANA,

*Commanding District of West Tennessee and Vicksburg,  
Memphis, Tenn.:*

*General:*—Your report of the 4th instant has been received, and I learn with sincere gratification of the successful results of the expedition sent by you on the 23d of last month for the destruction of the rebel General Hood's most important line of communication. Be pleased, general to accept my thanks for the skill with which you planned the details of this expedition and the excellent precautions taken to insure its perfect success, and convey to the officers and man, who shared its honors and dangers, and especially to Colonel Osband and Lieutenant-Colonel Cook, of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and Major Dale, of the second Wisconsin Cavalry, who was seriously wounded while leading his men against a superior force of the enemy, my warmest acknowledgment of the gallantry, the rapidity of movement, and the exemplary good order which marked throughout one of the most successful expeditions of its kind that has been undertaken during the present war.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ED. R. S. CANBY,

*Major-General Commanding.*





S. H. PETTENGILL,  
1st Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.



The major-general commanding department assures his officers and men that merit, gallantry, and enterprise shall always meet with recognition and reward.

By order or

MAJ. GEN. N. J. T. DANA,  
T. H. HARRIS,  
*Lieutenant-Colonel and  
Assistant Adjutant-General.*

Rebellion Records, Vol. XLV, Part 1, p. 780.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GRIERSON RAID, DEC. 21ST, 1864, TO JAN. 13TH, 1865.

*A Ride Through the Confederacy.—Foraging off the Country.—War's Havoc.—The Fight at Egypt Station and Franklin, Miss..*— The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry played a conspicuous part in this raid, often leading the van, marching by day and by night, fighting their way through the enemy's country.

This raid ranks with the greatest cavalry achievements of the civil war. It swept a swath many miles in width from Memphis, Tenn., to Vicksburg, Miss. The enemy's forces swarmed the country through which it passed, but the bold, rapid movements of the raiding column, making a feint here and an attack there, completely frustrated the opposing forces.

So the raiding column swept on, marching late into the night to capture some outlying garrison, while its flanking parties marched by the light of burning bridges, store-houses and factories.

Reports of the approach of the "yankee marauders" flew in advance of the column, carrying terror to the inhabitants and consternation to the armed forces of the Confederacy.

The troops composing this raiding column consisted of three brigades of veteran cavalry, viz: First Brigade, Second New Jersey Cavalry, Fourth Missouri Cavalry, Seventh Indiana Cavalry, and First Mississippi Mounted Rifles, commanded by Colonel Joseph Karge, Colonel Second New Jersey Cavalry

Second Brigade, Third and Fourth Iowa Cavalry, and Tenth Missouri Cavalry, commanded by Colonel E. F. Winslow, Colonel Fourth Iowa Cavalry; Third Brigade, Fourth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and 50 men of the pioneer corps, colored, the latter under command of Lieut. Lewis, of the Seventh Indiana Cavalry, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry under command of Major Ed. M. Main. This brigade was commanded by Colonel E. D. Osband, Colonel Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. The whole under command of Brigadier-General B. H. Grierson.

Previous to the departure of this expedition information was obtained that the enemy were accumulating large quantities of supplies on the line of the Mobile and Ohio and Mississippi Central Railroads for transportation to General Hood's army, and a brigade of troops was sent forward to make a demonstration on Bolivar, with orders to then swing southeast and join the main column near Ripley, but owing to heavy rains it was found impracticable to cross Wolf River, and not being able to form the intended junction, the command returned to Memphis.

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#### THE START.

On the morning of the 21st of December, 1864, the expedition left Memphis, accompanied by a large infantry force, and moved along the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad as far as Moscow, making a demonstration toward Corinth.

The cavalry under General Grierson, cut loose from the infantry near Germantown, and took the most direct route to Ripley, passing through Lamar and Salem. From Early Grove a detachment of the Tenth Missouri Cavalry, under Captain Neet, was ordered to proceed to the vicinity of Grand Junction and cut the railroad and telegraph lines.

No wagons nor artillery were taken with this expedition, the command moving in light marching order. Each man carried two days' cooked rations and forty rounds of ammunition, in addition to which, ten days' rations of coffee and hard-

tack, and 150 rounds of ammunition per man, was carried on pack animals. For other provisions for men and animals, the command was to rely on the resources of the country through which it would pass.

The pack train was a striking feature of the expedition, about 1000 animals, horses and mules, were used for this purpose, all the rations and extra ammunition for the command being carried in this way.

Each company was allowed a certain number of pack animals, which on the march, were consolidated into regimental and brigade pack trains, and placed under the command of commissioned officers, who were detailed each day for that duty. One soldier was detailed to take charge of two packs, leading them. Thus organized, the pack train made a long column in itself.

A place in the column was daily assigned the pack train, usually in the rear. Much difficulty was at first experienced in managing the pack animals, they being unused to the work, and many of them rebelled, making frantic efforts to free themselves from their burden by lying down and rolling over, while others, breaking away, would run amuck, doing no end of damage. Much amusement was often created by a mule running away with his pack, which colliding with a tree, would scatter hardtack and coffee in all directions. Much of the rations were in this way destroyed.

The weather was uncomfortably cold on the day the command left Memphis, and the roads were in a deplorable condition, much rain having fallen during the two or three days previous.

The command marched about 25 miles the first day, and camped that night in an old field. This first night in camp, long to be remembered, was marked by a good deal of suffering, both among the men and horses. Soon after going into camp a cold sleet set in, which later turned to snow, the temperature falling considerably below the freezing point, and the men, huddled together in groups, shivered in the pelting storm the live long night. Contrasted with the warm, comfortable quarters they had left in Memphis, this night's experience will

never be forgotten by those who endured it. The horses suffered little less than the men, being so numb and stiff the next morning that it was with the greatest difficulty they could move, and had to be rubbed and walked around before they could be saddled. However, this night's experience was frequently repeated during the raid.

The exposure to the rigor of the weather and the long, hard marches by day and night, overtaxed the endurance of both men and horses.

Hundreds of horses, breaking down, were abandoned along the road, their places being filled by animals, horses or mules, taken from the people living along the line of march, but altogether the people were benefitted, as the abandoned animals were superior to those taken, as a little rest was all they needed. About 300 fine horses of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, alone broke down, shot in action, etc, were lost on this raid.

It was truly pathetic to see these old cavalry horses, after being abandoned, trying to hobble along after the command.

A few days before the expedition left Memphis, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry drew 300 fine fresh horses to replace poor mounts, but not being seasoned to the service they soon broke down and were abandoned, only about a dozen surviving the raid.

On the 22d the command moved along the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad to a point near Moscow, thence, on the 23d, southeast through Early Grove, Lamar and Salem, reaching Ripley about noon on the 24th.

Up to this time no opposition was encountered.

From Ripley two detachments were sent out, one from the First brigade, under Major VanRensalaer, to Booneville, on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, to destroy it and the Confederate States property there, with orders to rejoin the command at Ellistown, 20 miles south of Ripley, the other detachment, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, under Captain Search, was sent to strike the same road at Guntown, and rejoin the main column at Ellistown. Both of these detachments were successful, the former capturing and destroying a large quantity of quartermaster's stores and five cars, besides cutting the telegraph wires,

burning railroad bridge, trestle-work, and capturing 20 prisoners.

The Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment destroyed the railroad track and telegraph line at Guntown. In the meantime the main column, after a few hours rest, left Ripley, moving toward Tupelo, where it arrived on the afternoon of the 25th. From this point the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Lieutenant-Colonel Funk, commanding, was sent to destroy the bridge and trestle-work over Old Town Creek. At the same time Colonel Karge, commanding First brigade, moved rapidly on Verona Station, seven miles south, information having been obtained that a force of 700 dismounted cavalry, belonging to Forrest's command, was stationed at that place, guarding an immense amount of C. S. A. supplies. The brigade charged into Verona about 10 o'clock that night, completely surprising the garrison, who could make but slight resistance, but aided by the darkness the most of them escaped into the woods.

This affair resulted in the easy capture of the town together with eight store-houses filled with fixed ammunition, estimated at 300 tons, 5,000 stand of small-arms, new carbines, 8,000 sacks of shelled corn, a large quantity of wheat, an immense amount of Quartermaster's stores—clothing, camp and garrison equipage, a train of 16 cars, and 200 army wagons. These wagons were the same that Forrest captured from General Sturgis in his unfortunate Guntown expedition in the preceding June. After completely destroying all this property, together with the buildings, depot and telegraph office, the brigade started to rejoin the main column, leaving the fire burning.

The conflagration was awe-inspiring beyond description, the flames, leaping skyward lighted the command on its way for many miles, while the terrific explosion of the ammunition, the bursting of shells and the roar and hissing of the flames created a wild and wierd scene that must linger long in the minds of all who witnessed it.

On the morning of the 26th the command left Tupelo. The Third brigade was ordered to proceed down the railroad and destroy the bridges, trestle-work, water tanks, etc. On arriving at Shannon the brigade surprised and captured a large train of cars containing 100 new wagons which were on their

way to Forrest's cavalry, besides a large amount of quartermaster's and commissary stores, all of which were destroyed. In this work the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry took an active part. When the main column reached Shannon, the Third brigade was relieved by the Second brigade, the Third brigade being ordered to proceed down the railroad, destroying it as it went, while the balance of the command moved forward on the road to Okolona, and camped that night on Chawappa Creek. On that day many miles of railroad and a number of bridges were destroyed. Major Main, with the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was ordered to destroy the railroad and bridges between Tupelo and Verona, while Captain Search, with the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, was sent to cut the railroad between Verona and Shannon, and Major Wood, with the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, was sent to destroy the railroad south of Shannon. These detachments of the Third brigade marched all night to rejoin the main column, which was found in camp on Chawappa Creek.

On the morning of the 27th the command moved out at an early hour, the Second brigade in advance, and after proceeding a few miles the enemy was encountered, when some skirmishing ensued, the enemy falling back before the steady advance of our troops. When near Okolona a rebel courier was captured with dispatches for the commander of the troops in Okolona. The dispatches stated that 1,300 infantry would re-enforce him from Mobile by railroad.

A scout was sent forward to reconnoitre the ground, who returned with a favorable report. This same scout was sent from this place to Memphis with dispatch to General Dana. He had some narrow escapes, being captured once and carried into the rebel lines and searched, but no papers being found on him, he was permitted to go his way, telling his captors that he was a good rebel and a citizen. A fight was now anticipated, and the order was given to close up in column of squadrons. The command forward given, and the long column moved out over the prairie in perfect order, with banners gaily fluttering in the breeze.

Okolona is situated on a level prairie of considerable extent,

and was distant about a mile from the point where our cavalry moved to the attack.

As the long column emerged from the woods, unfolding like the coils of a huge serpent, the command closed up in column of squadrons. The flags were unfurled, sabres flashed in the sunlight, bugles sounded "trot," then "gallop," and thus set in motion, the ground trembled beneath the tread of the charging battalions. The sight was grand, arousing all the martial spirit of the troopers, and one never to be forgotten.

As the column neared the town it divided, reaching out in two mighty wings that threatened to crush everything within its deadly embrace.

The enemy looked on in awed silence, not a gun was fired, then a white flag floated over the doomed garrison, which surrendered before the blow fell.

The promised re-inforcements had not arrived. Okolona with its immense stores of army supplies and many prisoners were captured without a struggle.

The depot, army supplies and all the government property were destroyed by fire.

During the work of destruction a long train of cars, bringing the promised re-inforcements, came in sight, but, on seeing the condition of things, it backed away. Telegraph dispatches from Confederate sources were intercepted at this place. One dispatch instructed the commanding officer at Egypt Station to hold that place at all hazards and stating that re-inforcements were being hurried forward to him by rail.

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#### THE FIGHT AT EGYPT STATION.

Leaving Okolona, the command camped that night about five miles from Egypt Station. The command was now in the heart of the enemy's country. The rebel forces were closing in around us, and were making strenuous efforts to concentrate their forces and turn back the raiding column.

During the night many deserters from the garrison at

Egypt Station came into our camp, many of whom were Union soldiers who had been taken prisoners and subsequently enlisted in the rebel army rather than suffer confinement in rebel prisons. Many of these men found friends and old comrades among our men, and their meeting was heartfelt and joyful.

The morning of December 28th, 1864, dawned bright and clear, finding every officer and man alert, for all knew well what work lay before them, and all realized, doubtless that might be the last sunrise they would ever look upon, and, alas for many of them it was their last day on earth, for the sun went down that day on the fresh upturned sod beneath which many of them were hastily buried.

The command was early in the saddle, the First brigade taking the advance, the Third brigade following, with the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry on the right, the Second brigade, or a part of it, remaining in the rear to guard prisoners and the pack train. The first brigade soon encountered the enemy's cavalry, which being ably handled by its commander, General Gholson, stubbornly contested the ground, but the First brigade pressed on, the sharp crack of their carbines being answered by the defiant yells of the enemy as they retreated from tree to tree, giving shot for shot.

Emerging from the timber into the open prairie, Egypt Station, with its formidable defenses, depot, and a few scattering buildings, came into view a mile or so distant. On being driven out of the woods into the open prairie, the rebel cavalry fell back under cover of the guns of the fort.

The First brigade on reaching the open ground, closed up in column of squadrons and charged the stockade directly in front, while the Third brigade diverged to the right, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry coming into position on the south side of the stockade. The Fourth Illinois Cavalry, however, having been detached as the brigade came into action, became hotly engaged with the rebel cavalry, driving them back and around to the rear of the stockade, where they mortally wounded General Gholson, and killed and wounded many of his men. In the meantime the First brigade received a disastrous check. As this brigade charged the stockade one thousand muskets belched forth a



murderous fire through the loop-holes of the stockade, before which many men and horses went down.

At this critical juncture Major Main, commanding Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, was ordered to dismount his men and charge the stockade on the south side, which order was promptly executed, the men responding with a yell as they came to the front midst a shower of bullets, but before they reached the fort a white flag was hoisted over it in token of surrender, when the firing ceased and the fort surrendered.

To the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, however, more than to any other portion of the command is due the credit of hastening the surrender. This regiment, riding down the rebel cavalry, swung around to the rear of the stockade, which being open and unprotected presented a good point of attack, which the Fourth Illinois Cavalry was not slow to take advantage of, and with their customary dash they charged into the gap. Thus assailed in front and flank by the Fourth Illinois Cavalry and the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, the garrison hastened to avert the final knock-out blow by hoisting a white flag.

The surrender, however, was effected none too soon, as almost simultaneously with the raising of the white flag over the fort, a 12 pound shot came hurtling through the air, heralding the approach of the promised re-inforcements. As the train bearing these re-inforcements slowed up about half a mile from the fort, it was discovered that they had two pieces of artillery, which were mounted on a flat car in front of the engine. The train backed up to the edge of the woods, where the troops, several regiments of infantry, were disembarked and formed line of battle on the open prairie, deployed a heavy skirmish line, and advanced in battle front. In the meantime the two pieces of artillery on the flat-car kept up a rapid fire, evidently meant as a bluff, as they did no damage, except to the railroad track. To have trained their guns directly on our men would have endangered the lives of their own men, now prisoners in and about the fort. As the enemy continued to advance from the woods, Major Main was ordered to move with his regiment, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and hold them in check, but to avoid bringing on an engagement if possible. The regiment, 800 strong

moved out over the prairie in column of squadrons in echelon, presenting a formidable appearance. On nearing the enemy, one company was deployed as skirmishers, and were soon exchanging shots with the enemy, who still continuing to advance, the skirmishers were recalled, and the regiment moved forward front into line with sabres drawn, at which the enemy, evidently expecting to be charged and not relishing the sight of so much cold steel, feel back to their cars, where they reformed under cover of the woods. In the mean time the dead were being buried, the wounded cared for, and the prisoners marched to the rear. Major Main received orders to hold his position until the entire command had withdrawn, then to follow in the rear, which he did, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry being the last to leave the scene of their late engagement. The enemy were in no condition to follow. The Union loss in this engagement was 70 killed and wounded, thirty of the wounded, too severely hurt to be moved, had to be left behind. Besides this, the command lost over 100 horses killed.

The enemy's loss was, prisoners between 800 and 1,000 killed and wounded 60 or more, among the killed being their commanding officer, General Gholson.. The command bivouaced that night near Houston, the night being well advanced when the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry reached the camping place.

Resuming the march on the morning of the 29th, the command passed through Houston, from which place two detachments were sent ont, one going toward West Point, and the other toward Pontotoc.

Orders were given to confiscate blankets, shoes, etc., for the use of the prisoners, who were in a deplorable state of destitution. This day's march was without incident, and the command camped that night near Bellfontain, capturing a few prisoners on the way.

Among the prisoners captured on the 30th was the notorious Tom Ford, whose business was to run down and conscript Union men.

He was known to have killed several Union men. He was placed under special guard but managed to make his escape.

From Bellfontain a detachment was sent toward Starkville to threaten the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, while another detachment was sent to Bankston, where a large manufacturing establishment was in operation, turning out one thousand yards of cotton cloth and 2,000 pairs of shoes per day.

The detachment reached the town late in the night and found the place as quiet as a graveyard, the inhabitants being in their beds, sleeping.

In addition to the factory there was a large flour mill, all of which was completely destroyed by setting fire to the building. Over 500 hands were employed in these mills. When the fire was well underway, the superintendent of the factory rushed out in his night clothes, swearing and threatening the night watchman, and demanding to know why he was making no attempt to put the fire out, but on seeing the soldiers he sought the commanding officer, who told him that, the night being cold, he had started the fire that his men might warm themselves. "Hell and damnation," said the superintendent, "would you burn the factory to have a fire just to warm yourselves?"

The Mayor of the town also put in an appearance, and with all the grandiloquent pomposity of a Mississippi magistrate, demanded the warrant for such high-handed proceedings, and choking with suppressed indignation, exclaimed, "Be Gawd, sah, it's agin the rules of civilized warfare. I shall report this outrage, sah, to my Government, sah, to my Government, the Confederate States of America, sah."

The work of destruction being completed, the command took its departure, leaving his honor, the Mayor, fairly frothing at the mouth.

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#### A TERRIBLE SLAUGHTER.

The command left Bellfontain on the morning of the 31st, taking the road to Middletown, reaching Lodi about noon. At or near Lodi one thousand fat hogs were captured. These hogs were enroute to the Confederate army.

The capture of this immense herd of swine seemed at first sight like a veritable bonanza, as pork was worth at that time, according to rebel quotations, \$5.00 per pound. If driven to Vicksburg these hogs would be a valuable contribution to Uncle Sam's commissary. But, alas, they proved to be a Jonah, taxed the patience of the command beyond endurance, and racked the brain of the General commanding as to what disposition could be made of them. Driving them through the enemy's country and fighting at the same time, proved impracticable. His hogship's inclination to root and to go in the contrary direction called forth maledictions of the most lurid character, but no progress could be made. It would not do to turn them adrift for the enemy to gather up again, so in sheer desperation it was decided that his hogship must be put to death, therefore the edict went forth that the hogs must be sacrificed on the grounds of military necessity, in fact to be shot to death. Consequently the whole squealing herd was rounded up and the death sentence carried into effect. Several companies of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry were detailed as executioners. When the slaughter was completed one thousand fat hogs lay dead on the bloody field.

There was considerable speculation as to the immediate or remote effect all this lubricating material would have on the soil. Some advanced the opinion that years hence rich land oil wells would be discovered there. It was the general opinion, however, that the saughter would afford a season of feasting for the buzzards.

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#### SUFFERING AMONG THE PRISONERS.

The prisoners became burdensome and greatly impeded the progress of the command. The weather was cold, snow falling on several occasions. Many of the prisoners were without shoes, and all were scantily clothed, and but for the kindness of the Union soldiers, sharing their blanketts with them, the suffering would have been much more intense.

The loss of so many horses, killed in action, broke down by hard riding, and abandoned, left many men dismounted, which also crippled the movement of the command. Wagons and vehicles of every kind and description were pressed into service to carry the sick and wounded soldiers and the foot-sore prisoners. To facilitate the movements of the command a certain number of troopers were required to dismount and march on foot, exchanging places alternately with an equal number of prisoners who were least able to walk. This arrangement caused some dissatisfaction among the soldiers, but on the whole they submitted good-naturedly.

The command was further handicapped by an army of refugees, principally colored people, men, women and children of all ages and condition. These people had joined the column from time to time until they numbered well on to twenty thousand, they had to be looked after and provided for. They were assigned a place in the column, and an officer with a corps of assistants was detailed to take charge of them.

The, column, including prisoners and refugees, extended miles in length and presented a grotesque appearance as it wound its weary way over hill and dale and through long stretches of pine woods, whose sombre silence, broken only by the sighing of the wind through the pine needles, seemed to whisper awful forebodings.

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THE FIGHT AT FRANKLIN.

*The Third U. S. to the Front.*

*Fighting at Close range. Revolver and sabre play an active part.*

On the morning of January 1, 1865, the command separated, the First and Second brigades, with the prisoners and refugees, moved toward Benton, while the Third Brigade, unincumbered and stripped for action, was sent down the line of the Mississippi Central Railroad, with instructions to destroy that road as far south as was found practicable, and then rejoin the main column at Benton.

Leaving Winona Station, going south along the line of the railroad, many miles of the road was destroyed. A detachment of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Captain Ira Smith commanding, was sent to destroy the railroad and bridges from Winona to Vaiden, a distance of 12 miles. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Ed. M. Main commanding, was sent to destroy the railroad, bridges and water tanks, from Vaiden to a point five miles south of West Station, a distance of 18 miles, where the two detachments rejoined the balance of the brigade, and went into camp for the night.

On the morning of January 2d, the brigade left the railroad, moving toward Benton, on the Franklin turnpike.

Franklin was a small hamlet situated about half way between West Station and Benton, on the Franklin turnpike, the distance between the two points being 45 or 50 miles. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry had the head of the column, with Company G, Captain Coykendall commanding, in the extreme advance. Information gathered from different sources indicated the close proximity of a considerable force of the enemy, cavalry, and it was expected that, being in sufficient force, they would intercept the brigade at some favorable point on the road. Therefore the regiment was held well in hand, ready to meet any sudden attack.

When quite near to Franklin, which was situated at the junction of two or more roads, where there was a church, the advance, under Captain Coyendall, was charged upon by a company of rebel cavalry, who came sweeping around the point where the roads came together at the church, with the evident intention of breaking the head of our column, but Captain Coykendall was an officer not easily stampeded, and with splendid bravery and coolness he met the charge with a volley that brought them up with a round turn, killing their commanding officer and several of his men, which he followed up with a charge that sent them back in great confusion.

When the attack was made Colonel Osband was riding at the head of the column with Major Main, and together they galloped to the front, the regiment following. A hasty survey of the situation disclosed the fact that the enemy was in large force,

and in position at the church and under cover of a V shaped piece of woods lying between the two roads, which came together at the church. The wooded space between these roads being but a few hundred yards in extent at this point. To our right was an open field extending around to the other side of the church. A single glance showed that the enemy had chosen well in selecting this position, but they counted too much on the simplicity of the foe that they were to meet. The advantage to be gained by securing possession of the woods and forcing the enemy into the open was at once apparent. Prompt action is the key to success in a cavalry fight of this kind, and no one realized the force of it more than Colonel Osband, and none was more quick to seize an opportunity. The rebels must have thought we were greenhorns if they supposed we would poke our heads around that point of timber only to have them shot off. They also showed an overweening confidence in their own prowess, or sadly underrated the military skill of their opponents by failing to properly protect their flanks.

So while they were waiting for us to come out in the open, eight companies of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry were hastily dismounted and sent through the woods, under Captain Emery, to fall on their flank and rear, at the same time Major Main, with the remaining four companies mounted, moved forward on the road toward the church. Colonel Osband, with the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, took the open field to the right, and, making a slight detour, gained a position in rear of the church, from where he opened a deadly cross fire on the enemy. The flank attack by our dismounted men under Captain Emery, was a complete surprize to the enemy, turning their flank and throwing them into some confusion, which, followed up by the charge of our mounted men, led by Major Main, drove them in confusion from their position.

But being largely re-inforced by fresh troops coming upon the field, they made a gallant charge, recovering some of the ground lost, and forcing Major Main to abandon the bridge he had taken in the first charge, his flank being threatened and his command in danger of being cut off.

The timely support, however, of a detachment of the Fourth

Illinois Cavalry, under the splendid leadership of Captain Merriman and Smith, turned the tide of battle in our favor at this point. Captains Merriman and Smith led their men into the thickest of the fight, and by their dash and daring contributed largely to the victory won.

With the support of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment, Major Main again led his black troopers to the charge, and succeeded, by the splendid dash of Lieutenant's Calais Matthews, and others, in retaking the bridge.

In the first charge, Major Main, Lieutenants Calais, Matthews and a colored sergeant (name not now recalled) crossed the bridge to find themselves face to face with a line of rebel cavalry. Wheeling their horses midst a shower of bullets from the enemy, they spurred back across the bridge closely pursued by the enemy. Thus riding neck and neck, the uplifted sabre of a rebel Major was about to descend on the head of Lieutenant Calais when it was stayed by the timely shot from the revolver of the colored sergeant, which put the rebel Major hors de combat. In the meantime the dismounted force under Captain Emery, were pressing the enemy back in their immediate front, but not without serious loss, Lieutenant Pettengill and several men being killed, and Lieutenant Farley and seven men wounded.

A portion of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, also dismounted, under Lieutenants Donica and Norton, did some splendid fighting, driving the enemy from some log houses in which they had taken shelter. Finally the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Funk, executed a flank movement that broke the enemy's formation, compelling him to withdraw from the fight for repairs, to which he did not again return, evidently having enough of it.

The enemy's loss in this fight, as subsequently verified, was 75 killed, including quite a number of commissioned officers, while their loss in wounded must have been heavy, many being left on the field, and others were removed during the fight.

Our loss was comparatively light. The loss of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was one commissioned officer and five men killed, one commissioned officer and eight men wounded.

In the death of Lieutenant Pettengill the regiment lost one of



its most efficient officers. He was temporarily acting Adjutant, and when Lieutenant Farley fell, wounded, leaving that company without a commissioned officer, Lieutenant Pettengill asked and received permission to take command of the company, and was killed almost immediately thereafter, shot through the breast while leading the company against the enemy. He died almost instantly, never speaking after he fell. His body was taken along with the regiment to Vicksburg, a distance of over one hundred miles, arriving at Vicksburg, his remains were placed in a metallic case and sent to his friends in Illinois. The numerous examples of personal bravery displayed by officers and men, both Union and Confederate, entitles the fight at Franklin to rank with the most spirited cavalry fights of the war.

An officer connected with this expedition, writing of the fight at Franklin, says, "Too much praise cannot be awarded the Third brigade for their conduct in this fight, and particularly that of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanded by Major Main. They alone repulsed several desperate charges. Their adjutant was killed. Colonel Osband, commanding the brigade, was all fight."

As the enemy showed no disposition to renew the fight, Colonel Osband withdrew his forces from the field, not, however, until our dead were buried and the wounded properly cared for. The enemy's dead and wounded were left where they fell to be cared for by their friends.

The sad duty of burying our dead comrades being performed, the command resumed its march, taking the road to Benton, the Fourth Illinois Cavalry remaining well in the rear to watch the movements of the enemy, it being expected they would follow and harass the command, but happily nothing more was seen of them. The brigade rejoined the main column late that night, having marched about 50 miles that day, two hours of the time being consumed in the fight at Franklin.

Colonel Noble, Third Iowa Cavalry, rejoined the column at Benton, he having been sent from Winona to Grenada to destroy the railroad and public property at that place. At Grenada he found in the office of the Grenada Picket, a paper of the day before, in which was an article stating that the "yankee raid had

played out, that Grierson's vandals had been repulsed and were making for Memphis with all speed." After reading the article Colonel Noble remarked that it was not General Grierson's intention to slight them, and ordered the destruction of their press and type.

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HEADED FOR VICKSBURG.

*Visions of rest and full rations cheer the weary and hungry troopers.*

From Benton, the whole command, now reunited, resumed the march on the morning of January 3d, going in the direction of Vicksburg. The march this day was without incident except some slight skirmishing by the advance guard, the command camping for the night at Mechanicsburg.

From Mechanicsburg the command proceeded to Clear Creek, where it camped on the night of the 4th, having marched 25 miles that day.

At Clear Creek the command was met by a supply train with rations and forage, which was sent out from Vicksburg, General Grierson having dispatched a request for the supplies some days previous.

The timely arrival of these supplies was hailed with manifestations of much joy by all—soldiers, prisoners, and refugees, whose fast had not been broken for twenty-four hours.

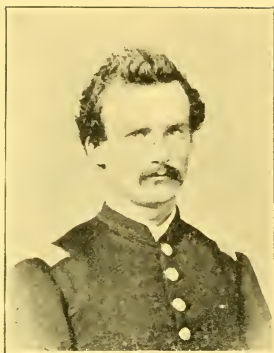
On the 5th, after a march of fifteen miles over muddy roads and in a cold, drenching rain, the command entered Vicksburg, where the raiders were received with loud acclamation of welcome.

Within the walled city of Vicksburg the command was given a short season of rest before taking boats for Memphis.

During the sixteen days consumed in making this raid the command marched over 500 miles, fought two decisive battles, engaged in almost continuous skirmishing, destroyed many miles of railroad and millions of dollars worth of property—army supplies, etc., and captured over 1,000 prisoners.

This raid had a salutary effect on the minds of the people





W. H. CHAPIN,  
2nd Lieut. Third U. S. C. C.

living within the zone of its operations. It impressed them with the power of the Federal Government. The sight of the old flag, seen by many of them for the first time since the war began, filled them with mingled emotions of pride and resentment.

They had seen their supposedly invincible legions fleeing before the steady advance of Grierson's raiders, their flag—the flag of secession—borne down and trampled in the dust. And after all, what traditions clustered around this new flag to inspire their devotion? What great principles did it stand for? Oh, had they been following the teachings of false prophets? The sight of the old flag recalled memories of the past, revived associations well nigh forgotten in the turmoil of secession.

Yes, the old flag—the star spangled banner, with her stars all there, was the one their fathers loved and fought under, that they carried to victory on the plains of Chalmette, and planted on the walls of Chapultepec. That flag, with the stars and stripes, stood for the Union. It was endeared to them by every tie of patriotism and association.

Oh, what was it Jackson said? O, it comes back to them now. "By the eternal, the Union must and shall be preserved."

So a change came over the spirit of these people—the mists of secession was dispelled by the white light of nobler ideals and loftier purposes.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

REPORTS OF THE GRIERSON RAID FROM THE REBELLION RECORDS.  
REPORT OF COLONEL E. D. OSBAND, COMMANDING THIRD  
BRIGADE.

HEADQUARTERS THIRD BRIGADE, CAVALRY DIVISION,  
DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

*Memphis, Tenn., January 13, 1865.*

*Captain:*—I have the honor to make the following report of the part taken by the Third Brigade in the recent raid from Memphis, Tenn., to Vicksburg, Miss. The brigade moved from

Memphis, as the rear of the Cavalry Division, on the morning of December 21, 1864, with ten days' rations and 120 rounds of ammunition per man, and numbered 47 officers and 1,679 enlisted men. At noon of the 24th of December, being at Ripley, Miss., I sent, by order of the general commanding, 200 men of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Capt. A. T. Search commanding, to cut the Mobile & Ohio Railroad. Moving directly east, about midnight they cut the railroad midway between Guntown and Baldwin Stations. After burning two bridges and tearing up one-quarter of a mile of track, they continued their march and joined the column at Ellistown at noon of the 25th, having captured seven prisoners and destroyed twenty-four stand of arms.

On the night of the 25th of December the brigade encamped three miles from Tupelo. By order of the general commanding, I sent forward the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Lieut. Col. Otto Funke commanding, who, after a night of most unusual exertion, completely destroyed the railroad bridge over Old Town Creek, 900 feet long, and tore up half a mile of track.

On the 26th I sent the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry down the railroad from Tupelo to Verona, the Fourth Illinois Cavalry from Verona to Shannon, and the Second Wisconsin Cavalry from Shannon as far below as they were able to go that night.

From Tupelo to Shannon about 2,500 feet of bridges and trestle-work were destroyed. The Fourth Illinois Cavalry burned ten railroad cars loaded with wagons at Verona, captured twenty loaded wagons, teams, etc., just south of that station, and destroyed repair shops and vast amount of material used by General Forrest at Verona. The Second Wisconsin Cavalry burned two Government warehouses at Shannon filled with quartermaster's stores, 300 stand of arms, 13 cars loaded with timber, and the important railroad bridges over the Sheawassa and Coonewar Creeks, many trestle-works and culverts, besides capturing one First Lieutenant and six enlisted men.

On the 27th, the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry totally destroyed the important bridges over the Chewappa and Tallaballah Creeks, each 200 feet in length, cutting down such parts as could not be burned. During the day the rear guard skirmished with about sixty of the enemy.

On the 28th I sent, as ordered, six companies of the Second

Wisconsin Cavalry, under Maj. William Woods, to hold Pikeville. Nearing Egypt Station, the column was closed up, and the skirmishing of the First Brigade becoming exceedingly warm, the pack train in my front being in confusion, blocking up the road, I took the field with the Fourth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry and Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, leaving six companies of the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, under Capt. N. DeForest, to guard brigade pack train and prisoners.

Moving rapidly toward the scene of the engagement, I was ordered by Colonel Karge to support his right flank, held by the Fourth Missouri Cavalry, who were carrying on a fight with Brigadier-General Gholson's command, who were inflicting great loss to the Fourth Missouri Cavalry from the shelter of a railroad embankment, without danger to themselves. Without firing one shot, the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, having formed line on the right of the Fourth Missouri Cavalry, charged, utterly routing Gholson and pursuing his flying squadrons to the road beyond. The revolver and sabre were freely used by our men, fifteen or twenty of the enemy being either killed or wounded, including Brigadier-General Gholson, mortally wounded, one Lieutenant-Colonel, five line officers and ten enlisted men were captured. In this brilliant attack we lost two men, severely wounded; the enemy, their killed, wounded and prisoners, the total rout and dispersion of their entire cavalry force, had their left turned, and the retreat to the swamp, before this, open to the garrison of the stockade, entirely and permanently cut off.

Immediately to the rear, and supporting the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, I moved the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, but finding the Fourth able to meet all the force of the enemy on that side of the railroad, I changed the direction of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry by a left wheel and moved them up to the rear of the houses situated to the right of the stockade, which furnished them admirable cover for their horses, intending to attack the stockade with them dismounted. The regiment was here ordered to move to the rear of the stockade mounted, and in making the movement were exposed to a heavy fire, suffering a loss of one man killed, two officers and thirteen enlisted men wounded. Forming in the new position, Colonel Funk dismounted his men and advanced to assault the stockade, but before his men came within range it

had surrendered. I moved the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry to the position recently occupied by the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, under cover of the houses, and dismounted them. The dismounted column formed and commenced to move on the stockade, when it surrendered. Two companies Second Wisconsin Cavalry and two companies Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, were, by direction of the general commanding, placed on the extreme left of our line; but, although they had a few horses wounded, they did not to any extent participate in the engagement.

Nine enlisted men of the Eleventh Illinois Volunteer Cavalry were too badly wounded to be moved, and after their wounds were dressed by our surgeon, they were left at Egypt Station. The Second Wisconsin Cavalry was immediately detached to guard the prisoners, and did not afterward participate in the movement of the brigade.

On the morning of January 1, 1865, I moved, by order of the general commanding, from Winona Station down to the line of the Mississippi Central Railroad, flanking the line of march of the main column. I sent strong dismounted details from the Fourth Illinois Cavalry and the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry from Winona Station, through Vaiden and West Station, to a point five miles below the latter place, a distance of twenty-nine miles. They totally destroyed two and a half miles of track, nineteen bridges, twelve culverts, together with station-house, water-tanks, etc. Ten of these bridges were important structures, and must require thirty days to repair. On the morning of the 2d, learning that the Confederates were concentrating a strong force at Goodman Station, I left the line of the railroad and moved on the Franklin pike in the direction of Ebenezer and Benton. When half a mile from Franklin my advance of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was charged by a strong force of the enemy. The charge was repulsed, and the rebels driven from their advanced position. The force proved to be those of Brigadier-General Wirt Adams, 1,500 strong, who, coming from Goodman, had pushed one regiment to a junction of the roads, covering them in some close timber skirting the road and about a church surrounded by shrubbery. A flank movement of two squadrons of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanded by Capt. Harry Fretz, Company L, dislodged them from the church, while seven squadrons of the



Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, under Major E. M. Main, dislodged them from the close timber by falling upon their flank and rear, thus compelling them to fall back to a bridge over a small stream, where General Adams had concentrated the main body of his men. Major Main immediately charged and carried the bridge, but, in turn, was driven over it in some confusion by the enemy, who, being heavily re-inforced, outnumbered him three to one.

We should here have lost numbers of our men except for the most determined gallantry of our officers, particularly prominent among whom was Lieut. Frank W. Calais, Company A, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. In the meantime, the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry moved to our extreme right, where they arrived in time to check a flank movement of the enemy. After sharp fighting, the movement was checked, their left turned, and their forces driven to the main body at the bridge.

The Fourth Illinois Cavalry, moving promptly to the support of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, met and repulsed a flank movement of the enemy directed to our left, when quickly dismounting and jumping from tree to tree, soon drove the rebels to the cover of the house across the creek.

At this time, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry again charged and carried the bridge, from which they were not again driven during the fight.

The desperate nature of the fighting, the superiority of numbers displayed by General Adams, and a summons from the general commanding to immediately join the column, now fifteen miles to our front and right, induced me to attempt to withdraw my men. Fortunately, General Adams concluded to withdraw his men, and we mutually separated without further fighting.

One enlisted man from the Fourth Illinois Cavalry and one from the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, too severely wounded to be moved, were left at Franklin. Our loss was 1 officer killed and 1 wounded, and three enlisted men killed, seven wounded and two missing. The enemy left one major, one lieutenant, and fifty men dead upon the field, aside from which we took seven prisoners. It was the hardest fought cavalry fight in which the brigade, as such, were ever engaged.

I cannot forbear the mention of the loss sustained by the death of First Lieut. and Acting Adjt. Seward H. Pettingill, Third

U. S. Colored Cavalry; he was thoroughly the embodiment of the accomplished gentleman and the dashing soldier.

Moving through Ebenezer, I joined the main column at Benton the same night, having been engaged with the enemy one hour and a half and marched forty-three miles. My horses are worn out with the labor of fifty days' consecutive riding, and need rest and care. My men are unusually well, not more than twenty being admitted to the hospital from both sick and wounded.

I desire to thank Capt. John F. Wallace, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, acting aide-de-camp, for the very valuable services rendered throughout the expedition.

Attention is called to enclosed reports of the regimental commanders, also statement of Lieutenant Nesbet, Fifth Illinois Cavalry.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Col. Third U. S. Col. Cavalry,*

*Commanding Third Brigade Cav. Div.*

CAPT S. L. WOODWARD,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XLV, Part 1, pp. 856-859.)

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REPORT OF CAPT. ANTHONY T. SEARCH, FOURTH ILLINOIS CAVALRY.

*Vicksburg, Miss, January 10, 1865.*

*Colonel:*—I have the honor to report, in obedience to your orders, the part taken by my command, consisting of five companies and numbering 260 effective men, in the recent cavalry raid through Northern Mississippi.

At Ripley, fourteen miles east of Lamar, on the Mississippi Central Railroad, on the 24th ultimo, by order, I left the main column with 200 of my best mounted men and marched twenty-five miles east to the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, striking it about midnight between Ballwyn and Guntown Stations. After setting fire to two bridges, tearing up as much of the track as was possible with the tools in our possession, and cutting the telegraph wire, I took up my line of march for Ellistown, sixteen miles distant, where I rejoined the brigade at noon of the 25th. During this trip, which was unusually hard on the horses on account

of the excessively bad roads and the darkness of the night, we captured seven prisoners and destroyed twenty-six stand of arms.

At Verona, on the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, on the 26th, I destroyed a train of twenty abandoned wagons, loaded with provisions and clothing, and captured sixty head of mules. We reached Egypt Station, on the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, in the forenoon of the 28th, and found the First Brigade, Colonel Karge commanding, engaged in a sharp fight with the enemy, who were well protected behind stockades and the railroad embankment, and were severely punishing our forces without loss to themselves. In obedience to your order, I moved my regiment and formed companies—E, Captain Smith commanding; B, Captain Merriman; A, Lieutenant Donica commanding—in line on the extreme right of the line formed by the First Brigade, supporting them by the two other companies—D, Lieutenant Taylor commanding, and C, First Sergeant Arnold commanding. Seeing at once that the enemy were securely posted out of sight and danger and behind the railroad embankment, I ordered a charge, for the purpose of dislodging them and turning their left. Notwithstanding the soft condition of the ground (a cultivated field), the charge was entirely successful. The enemy were driven a distance of about 100 rods to the timber, where a deep ditch checked our pursuit and enabled a majority of them to escape. We, however, captured fifteen, including a lieutenant-colonel and several line officers. Several were also killed and wounded, among them Brigadier-General Gholson, mortally wounded. My loss was very light—two men slightly wounded and seventeen horses killed and disabled.

On the morning of the 1st instant, I sent Captain Smith, with 100 men, dismounted, from camp near Winona Station, on the Mississippi Central Railroad, to destroy the railroad between that point and Vaiden Station, a distance of twelve miles. This work was performed by Captain Smith with his usual energy. He burned nine bridges and six trestle-works, and tore up much of the track, rejoining the command a little after noon near Vaiden.

In the engagement at Franklin, on the 2d instant, my regiment being in the rear, did not reach the field until some time after the fight began between the enemy and the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. On reaching the scene of action one company (E, Captain

Smith commanding) was ordered to go to the relief of Major Main, of the Third United States, who, with a detachment of his regiment, was holding the enemy in check at the bridge. Two other companies, A and B, under Captain Merriman, were ordered to move into the field to the right, to intercept flank movements from the enemy's left. Companies C and D remained to guard the pack train.

After getting near the timber to the right, Captain Merriman ordered Companies A and B, under the immediate charge of Lieutenants Donica and Norton, to dismount and enter the timber. They did so, moving up the stream and toward the bridge, near which the enemy were concealed in log houses and behind rail fences. Lieutenant Norton moved his company, B, under a sharp fire from the enemy, to a position opposite the houses and posted his men behind trees and logs. Lieutenant Donica took a position a little farther to the right and across the creek. In this position these two companies engaged the enemy for nearly thirty minutes. The number of the enemy seemed so greatly superior to my own, and the firing became so severe, that I dispatched Lieutenant Hitt to ask for re-enforcements. He soon returned, however, with an order from you to withdraw my men and protect the left flank of Major Main's command, which was ordered back from the bridge. Fortunately, just after the order was received, the enemy retreated from the log houses and fences in my front, or I could not have extricated my command from the position we occupied without severe loss.

In this engagement I regret to record the loss of 2 men killed and 1 wounded, not seriously. Captain Smith reports that from his position at the bridge he saw 9 of the enemy lying dead.

My regiment continued in the rear during the day, and apprehending that we might be followed, I ordered Captain Smith to take Companies C and F, and form a strong extreme rear guard—a precaution that proved unnecessary, as the enemy did not make his appearance, doubtless having been too severely punished in the fight to be in a condition to follow us. From this time until our arrival at Vicksburg, on the evening of the 5th instant, my regiment had no special duty to perform.

The total number of animals captured during the raid, besides the 60 mules captured at Verona, was 38 horses and 27 mules; making a total of 125 head.

In consequence of the rapid marching in the early part of the raid, some 75 or 80 of my horses became used up and had to be abandoned.

I cannot conclude, colonel, without remarking that the conduct of the officers and men of my regiment, both at Egypt and Franklin, was unexceptional, and characterized by their usual bravery and willingness to meet the foe.

I remain, colonel, with sentiments of high esteem, very truly and respectfully yours, &c.,

A. T. SEARCH,  
*Captain, Commanding  
Fourth Illinois Cavalry.*

COLONEL E. D. OSBAND,  
*Commanding Third Brigade, Cavalry Div.,  
Department of the Mississippi.*  
(Rebellion Records, Vol. XLV., Part 1, p. 859-861.)

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## CHAPTER XX.

EXPEDITION IN SOUTHEASTERN ARKANSAS AND NORTHEASTERN  
LOUISIANA, JANUARY 26TH TO FEBRUARY 10TH, 1865.

This expedition, consisting of three brigades of cavalry, left Memphis, Tenn., on January 26th, 1865, on fifteen transports.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Ed. M. Main commanding, formed a part of the Third Brigade. Brevet Brigadier-General E. D. Osband commanded the expedition. The transports ran down the river to Eunice Landing, on the Arkansas side, where the troops were disembarked on the 28th, and marched to Bayou Macon, arriving there about 1 p. m. same day, and commenced ferrying the command over the Bayou, which was not completed until the following morning, working all night by the light of fires kept burning on both sides of the Bayou. January 29th, the command marched at 8 a. m. following the west bank of the Bayou to Masons Lake, thence southeasterly toward Bayou Bartholomew, which was reached about 2 p. m., where the command camped for the night. The road from Mason's Lake to

Bayou Bartholomew ran through an almost impassable swamp, many of the horses mired down, and much difficulty was experienced in getting the command through.

On the 30th the command marched at 8 a. m. following the Bayou to Holloway's Ferry, a distance of 25 miles, capturing a few prisoners and a number of horses and mules. Detachments were sent out from this point to scout the country in different directions. These scouting parties brought in a number of horses and mules, and burnt a large flour mill, which was grinding meal for the rebel army.

On the 31st, the command marched at an early hour, detachments being sent out on both flanks, with orders to join the main column at Turner's Woodyard, where the whole command camped that night. One of the detachments, the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, captured a steamboat at Poplar Bluff, which was taking on a cargo of corn for the rebel forces at Camden.

The captured steamboat was run down to Turner's Woodyard and burnt, her officers and crew being made prisoners.

A distillery, flour mill, and a quantity of cotton and corn, the property of the Confederate States Government, were also captured and destroyed at Poplar Bluff. February 1st the command proceeded along the bayou to Knox's Ferry, thence to Bastrop, where it camped for the night, remaining there during the following day. On the 2d, while the command rested at Bastrop, a detachment of the Third Brigade, Colonel Funk commanding, was sent to Oak Ridge, where a force of the enemy under Colonel McNeil, was reported to be stationed, but on arrival at the place, Colonel Funk found no enemy; McNeil's men had scattered in every direction. A few of them, however, were captured as they were straggling through the country.

Moving at daylight on the morning of the 3d, the command marched to Point Pleasant, near which place it crossed the bayou and camped for the night. On the 4th, the command marched 28 miles, and camped near the Louisiana State line. On the 5th the advance brigade reached Hamburg, Ark., late in the evening; the balance of the command, owing to the terrible condition of the roads and the swollen streams, did not get up until the next day.

The command waited at Hamburg during the 6th for the stragglers to come up. February 7th, the command marched at

an early hour, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry having the advance, which reached Collon's Mill about dark that evening. The mill was grinding corn for the Confederate soldiers, a company of whom were guarding the mill; they were driven off and the mill destroyed. The main column coming up, camped here for the night. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, however, was ordered to move on a few miles and camp at a cross-roads, and, later, was ordered to move at daylight and proceed to find a place where the command could cross Bayou Bartholomew. A crossing was found, but, after ferrying a part of the regiment over, it was found impossible to proceed on account of the back water, returning, the regiment turned north, going up the west side of the bayou to Shanghai, arriving there about noon, on the 9th. While at Shanghai the regiment was joined by the balance of the command.

Leaving Shanghai, the command proceeded to Bayou Bartholomew, distant about four miles, where a crossing was effected under many difficulties. The bayou was bank-full, weather cold, a thin sheet of ice covering the surface of the water. The bayou was about 200 yards wide at this point. Volunteers were called for to ride in and test the crossing. One of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalrymen urged his horse into the stream, but only to meet his death in midstream, where his horse floundered, and both were drowned. Undaunted, however, by the fate of their comrade, others plunged in, and, after bravely battling with the ice and cold water, reached the opposite bank in safety; then the whole command, one company at a time, swam over, when fires were built, and the men given time to dry and warm themselves. The command camped that night near the Hughes plantation.

Quite a romance lurks around this old plantation, dating from the night the command camped there. Lieutenant Whiting, regimental Quartermaster of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, formed the acquaintance of the young lady of the Hughes household, Miss Anna Cheirs, the charming and accomplished daughter of Mrs. Hughes by a former marriage, Mrs. Hughes being then the second time widowed. This brief and incidental meeting between Miss Cheirs and Lieutenant Whiting, in the fullness of time ripened into mutual admiration, which culminated in marriage, thus forging another link in the chain that binds the North

and South together. Years after the war, while on a visit to the old home on Bayou Bartholomew, with his wife and son, Lieutenant Whiting died of malarial fever.

On the 10th, the command resumed the march, crossing Bayou Macon about 11 a. m., and reached Gaines' Landing, on the Mississippi River, that evening, where the transports were waiting to take the command up the river to Memphis.

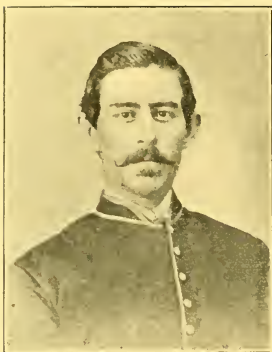
The hardships, exposures and suffering endured on this raid surpasses any like experience of the war. The weather was cold, snow and sleet falling repeatedly. The spring rains had set in, rendering the roads well night impassable. The rivers and small streams were out of their banks, overflowing the bottom lands. Bridges were swept away, and crossings made extremely difficult. Frequently the command would be out of sight of land for a whole day at a time. The horses splashed and floundered through mud and water from knee to belly deep. Where bridges were gone—swept away—swimming was the only alternative, and many men lost their lives in this way. Eight men of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry alone, were drowned in swimming streams. No regular order of march could be maintained; it was a sort of go as you please. Not much attention was paid to the usual route of travel as regarded roads. After one regiment had passed over the ground it was rendered too boggy for others to follow, so the command scattered, each regiment seeking a new route, thus leaving a wide trail, which could be traced years after the war.

One incident happened that excited the sympathy of the entire command. On the 6th of February, while crossing a stream with muddy banks, acting Lieutenant David P. Sherfy's horse fell on him, breaking his leg. The accident occurred about 4 p. m., and on being rescued from the mud and water, he was helped on his horse at his own request, and continued with his company until the command went into camp that night, when the surgeon set the broken bones and made him as comfortable as possible.

It was proposed to leave him at some wayside house until he could be sent for, but he would not listen to it, declaring that he would ride his horse and keep with the command. It being impossible to procure any kind of a conveyance in that sparsely settled region, he was allowed to have his way. And so, with his







DAVID P. SHERFY, alias GEO. W. GARBER,  
1st Sergt. Third U. S. C. C.

broken leg well wrapped and padded with cotton, and a detail of men to take care of him, he made the march to Gaines Landing, four days in the saddle with a broken leg.

Sherfy was one of the white sergeants, and having been recommended for promotion, was acting Lieutenant. He was a man with a history. A native of Tennessee, he was living in Arkansas at the outbreak of the war, and incurring the ill-will of the ultra secessionists on account of his Union sentiments, he attempted to flee the country, but was hunted down, captured and forced to serve in the rebel army, from which he subsequently escaped, and made his way to the Union lines in southeast Missouri, traveling over 200 miles on foot, hiding in the woods by day and traveling by night. On reaching the Union lines, he enlisted in a company of Illinois Cavalry, under the name of George W Garber, assuming this name to hide his identity in case of being captured by the enemy. Subsequently he became a member of the famous Eleventh Illinois Infantry, in which regiment he did gallant service, being promoted to the rank of sergeant for meritorious conduct in action. He was discharged from the Eleventh Illinois Infantry to accept promotion in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, coming to this regiment with testimonials of the highest character.

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SECOND LIEUTENANT DAVID P. SHERFY.

Was born near Jonesborough, Washington County, State of Tennessee, October 19, 1839. At the outbreak of the war, he was living in Arkansas, where his loyalty to the Union, finding expression in outspoken sentiments, brought down upon him the wrath of the ultra secessionists, and he, with others, was compelled to flee the country, closely pursued by a band of partisan rangers, who captured a number of the party and put them to death. The subject of this sketch, being well mounted, led his pursuers a long chase. With a view to reaching the Union lines, he shaped his course for Southeast Missouri, travelling over 200 miles, frequently hiding in the swamp during the day, and travelling by night. When near Charleston, Mo., he was captured by a band of rebel bushwhackers, who took him to the camp of the rebel General Jeff Thompson, where he was held as a Union spy.

General Thompson had information to apprehend, if found, a Union spy by the name of David P. Sherfy, but there being no one present who could identify him, he gave his name as George W. Garber, claiming that he lived in St. Louis, and denying that he had ever been in Arkansas.

General Thompson, however, was not satisfied with this statement, and remanded him to the guard-house pending further developments. In the meantime a squad of rebel prisoners in charge of a Union officer, arrived at the camp. These prisoners, by previous agreement, had been sent to General Thompson for exchange, by the Union commander at Birds Point. A list of the Union prisoners, who were to be exchanged was handed to the rebel sergeant on duty at the guard house, who called off the names on the list, each man stepping out as his name was called.

Great was Lieut. Sherfy's joy and surprise on hearing his assumed name, George W. Garber, called, but concealing his excitement, he coolly walked out and took his place in the line of exchanged prisoners.

His timely rescue was brought about in this way: Will Carson, a Union scout, was in the rebel camp when Lieut. Sherfy was brought in, and the case coming to his knowledge, he reported the matter to the Union commander at Bird's Point, suggesting that the name of George W. Garber be included in the list of prisoners to be exchanged. Thus it was that Lieut. Sherfy, known in the army as George W. Garber, retained his alias, fearing that should he again fall into the hands of the enemy, under the name of Sherfy, it might go hard with him.

The brave scout, Will Carson, was subsequently killed at the battle of Shiloh, Sunday evening, April 6th, while seated on his horse near the river and but a few yards from General Grant, whose chief of scouts he was. A shot from one of the enemy's batteries clove his head from his shoulders. He was an ideal scout, and in his untimely death, the Union army lost a man whose place was never filled.

After his lucky escape from the rebels, Lieut. Sherfy proceeded to Cairo, Ill., where he enlisted in Company H, First Illinois Cavalry, which company being disbanded in June, 1862, he re-enlisted, August 1, 1862, in Company C, Eleventh Illinois Infantry, in which regiment he served until March, 1864, taking

part in all the battles and campaigns of that famous regiment, from Fort Donelson to Vicksburg, including the seige of the last named place, and the famous charge of May 22d, winning, for gallant conduct, a Corporal's chevrons. He was discharged from the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, March, 1864, for promotion as 2d Lieutenant, in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. He served in the last named regiment with great credit, until September, 1865, when he was compelled to quit the service, by reason of wounds, and unfortunately before receiving his commission.

During the raid in Louisiana and Arkansas, in February, 1865, he had his leg badly fractured by his horse falling on him while floundering in the mud, in crossing a stream. At this time the regiment was far out in the enemy's country, swarming with their cavalry. Unwilling to be left to the uncertain charity of his enemies, on account of his previous experience with them, he insisted on remaining with the command, though suffering intensely. The command being provided with no means of transportation save their horses, and no vehicles of any sort being procurable in that desolate region, the question arose as to how the injured man could be carried back to camp, but the brave Lieutenant solved the problem by declaring that he would ride his horse; so with his leg swarthed in splints and bandages and a detail of men to attend him, he rode his horse back to camp, 4 days being consumed in the homeward march. The indomitable pluck displayed by Lieutenant Sherfy during this trying ordeal elicited the admiration of the whole command.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

REPORT OF COLONEL E. D. OSBAND, COMMANDING CAVALRY EXPEDITION IN SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS AND NORTHEAST LOUISIANA, JANUARY 26 TO FEBRUARY 10, 1865.

HEADQUARTERS, CAVALRY DIVISION,

DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI,

*Memphis, Tenn., February 25, 1865.*

*Captain:*—I have the honor to forward the following report of

the late cavalry expedition into Arkansas and Louisiana under my command.

The expedition consisted of detachments of the following brigades and regiments: First Brigade, Colonel J. P. C. Shanks; Seventh Indiana Cavalry, 155; Fifth Illinois Cavalry, 349; First Mississippi Cavalry, 57; total, 561. Second Brigade, Colonel Dox, Twelfth Illinois Cavalry, 260; Eleventh New York Cavalry, 340; total, 600. Third Brigade, Lieutenant Colonel Otto Funk; Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, 340; Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, 450; Second Wisconsin Cavalry, 400; Fourth Illinois Cavalry, 270; total, 1,460; making a total force of 2,621 men.

At 5 p. m. on the evening of the 26th of January, 1865, the troops were embarked on the transports John Raine, Autocrat, Laurel Hill, Fanny Ogden, Sallie List, Carrie Jacobs, Virginia Barton, Tycoon, Illinois, Ida May, Starlight, Bell of Peoria, Maria Denning and Landes.

By 10 p. m. the embarkation being complete, the fleet started for Gaines Landing, Arkansas. Nothing of interest occurred during the trip.

On the morning of the 28th, we arrived at Eunice, a point six miles above Gaines Landing, at 4:30 a. m. Owing to the darkness a collision occurred between the steamers Landes and Ida May, by which the latter was considerably damaged. The troops being disembarked, I immediately ordered the steamers John Raine, Autocrat, Laurel Hill and Maria Denning to proceed to Gaines Landing, there to await further orders from me; and in order to save any unnecessary expense, I relieved the small boats and ordered them to report to the quartermasters under whose charge they had been previously. At 8 a. m. we took up line of march for Bayou Macon, and arrived at the ferry at 1 p. m., the advance guard capturing a few pickets that had been stationed at the ferry for the purpose of preventing any cotton being brought to the Mississippi River unless properly permitted by the cotton bureau.

Commenced ferrying the command across the bayou, which was completed at 2 a. m. on the morning of the 29th. At this point I left one squadron of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry to guard the ferry, also thinking that probably they might be able to pick up any small scouting parties that would approach the bayou.

January 29th, marched at 8 a. m. down the western bank of the bayou to Mason's lake, where we struck off in a southeasterly direction toward Bayou Bartholomew, the road running through an almost impassable swamp for a distance of twelve miles. Reached Bayou Bartholomew at Judge Belzer's about 2 p. m. Finding a considerable quantity of corn at this plantation, I directed the rear brigade to procure and take with them forage for night and morning, and then follow the command to the next plantation, about four miles down the bayou. This last four miles of road was even worse than the preceding twelve miles, and several pack-mules became so completely exhausted from fatigue and frequent miring down that they had to be abandoned.

On January 30th, marched at 8 a. m. down the bayou to Holloway's Ferry, distance 25 miles; nothing of interest occurred except the capture of some prisoners by the advance guard, and horses and mules by flanking parties, sent out for that purpose. Also burned a large steam grist mill which was in the employ of the Confederate Government.

At Holloway's Ferry, I sent a detachment of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry across the bayou. At a distance of a mile and a half from the ferry they found a supply depot, which contained a considerable amount of ammunition. These, with the buildings were destroyed.

January 31st, marched at 6 a. m. Hearing that the C. S. transport, Jim Barkman, was loading corn for the use of troops at Camden, at a point ten miles down the bayou, called Poplar Bluff, I immediately sent a detachment of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, at a rapid gait, to intercept her, which was successfully performed, together with her crew and some ten or fifteen other prisoners, who were picked up in the vicinity.

I placed a commissioned officer and 25 men on board the steamboat and ordered them to proceed down the bayou to Turner's Woodyard, where I intended camping for the night, instructing the officer to take in tow all ferry-boats he might find. At Poplar Bluff I ordered to be burned a distillery and grist-mill, together with a large lot of cotton and corn, which I was informed was the property of the Confederate Government.

February 1st, marched at 6 a. m., proceeded along the bayou to Knox's Ferry; here left the bayou and took the Bastrop road;

directed the officer in charge of the steamer to await me at Point Pleasant, a landing about two miles from the town of Bastrop.

From the best information I obtained, I was led to believe that Colonel McNeill had a force of some 800 men at Oak Ridge, and judging that the heavy rains had rendered the country below Oak Ridge toward Boeuf River impassable, and that consequently if pushed he would endeavor to go toward Monroe, I determined on sending the Third Brigade to Oak Ridge, at the same time pushing the First and Second Brigades through Bastrop, La., to a point called Great Mills, where the Oak Ridge and Monroe road crossed Boeuf Bayou, hoping by this disposition of my forces to either capture his command or at least force a fight. I also directed Colonel Shanks to send a portion of the force under his command to Monroe.

February 2d, remained at Bastrop all day with the Fourth Illinois Cavalry and detachments of the three brigades left in charge of the pack train. Foraging details brought in a large number of horses, mules and negroes. At 3 p. m., Colonel Funk arrived, and reported that on reaching Oak Ridge he found that McNeill's forces had been greatly exaggerated, it amounting only to some sixty men, poorly armed, who, hearing of his approach, fled and scattered about in the swamps. He succeeded in taking several prisoners and capturing some very good horses and mules.

February 3d, detached two squadrons of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, with orders to proceed to Prairie Mer Rouge (which I was informed was the finest agricultural portion of that section of the country) and burn all large quantities of forage, cotton, etc., that he might find; also to bring in all serviceable animals and negroes, and to rejoin the command at Hamburg, coming up the west side of Bayou Bartholomew from Knox's Ferry for that purpose. In the interim Colonel Shanks returned and reported that he had gone, as directed, to Grant's Mills; found no enemy; had also sent a detachment into Monroe; found the place nearly deserted, all Government property having been removed by Harrison across the Washita River.

Completing the crossing of the command by 2 a. m. of the 4th. As soon as this was effected, I burned the steamboat and sank her hull in a narrow part of the channel.

February 4th, marched at 6 a. m., in a northeasterly direction



toward Hamburg, Ark., marched 28 miles and went into camp near Louisiana State line. From this point I sent a small detachment of the Second Wisconsin Cavalry, with orders to proceed north along the bayou, gather up all the stock they could find, and to join me at Gaster's Ferry.

February 5th, marched at 6 a. m. Owing to the continuous heavy rain, the country was completely flooded, and the character of the soil was such that after a few horses had passed over the road, it became a perfect quicksand, while on each side of the road the land was so spouty that it afforded no footing whatever, the animals immediately miring down. Notwithstanding this, I marched to Hamburg with the advance brigade. The other two brigades experienced considerable difficulty, as it became necessary for them to bridge several small streams that had been forded by the advance brigade.

They also lost several animals and some material, and were unable to reach Hamburg till the 6th. This was the most severe weather we experienced during the trip, being not only wet but also intensely cold. Several contrabands perished from cold and exposure in their wet condition.

February 6th, the detachment of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry sent to Prairie Mer Rouge, rejoined the command, and reported having burned about 200,000 bushels of corn, some cotton, and brought in several horses, mules and negroes. They also captured a few prisoners.

February 7th, marched at 5 a. m., and after experiencing difficulty, on account of all the small creeks and sloughs being very full, reached Collins' Mill with a part of the Third Brigade at 7 p. m.

February 8th, remained at Collins' all day in order to give the rear brigades an opportunity of closing up, as it had been considerably delayed in bridging streams and the wretched condition of the roads.

February 9th, marched at 6 a. m., going through the town of Shanghai to Bayou Bartholomew; crossed the bayou at Taylor's Ferry and went into camp at Hughes' plantation with a part of the First Brigade, the provost guard and the prisoners at 3 p. m.

February 10th, marched at 6 a. m. Crossed Bayou at 11 a. m., and reached Gaines Landing at 2 p. m.

February 11th, embarked the Fourth Illinois Cavalry (who had acted as provost guard during the expedition) with the prisoners captured, on board the steamer Laurel Hill, and the Fifth Illinois Cavalry in the steamer Autocrat.

As soon as these boats had returned to Gaines Landing with coal for the remainder of the fleet, I embarked the command and returned to Memphis.

Taking into consideration the exceedingly adverse circumstances under which the expedition was made, the losses, both in men and material, are singularly light. The following is a report of these losses:

Men: 1 killed, 2 captured, and 7 left sick, unable to ride; total number lost, 10. Horses, 203; mules 49; horse equipments (sets), 20; pack saddles, 6. Carbines, 30; pistols, 38; picket ropes, 1.

Our captures of stock foot up as follows: Horses of superior quality turned over to the regiments, 182; horses of superior quality turned over to the division quartermaster, 94; mules (serviceable) turned over to regiments, and division quartermaster, 358; showing a net gain of stock of 75 horses and 309 mules. We also brought in 440 negroes, of whom 200 went into the service. The remainder were principally women and children. During the expedition 44 prisoners were captured, and a large number of deserters and refugees brought in.

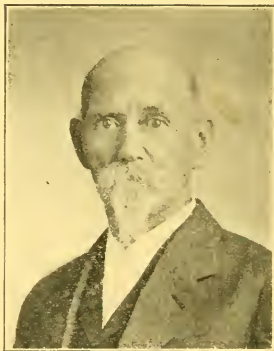
We also destroyed at various points large amounts of cotton, corn and meat; also burned several mills, distilleries, and storehouses, which were in the use of the Confederate Government.

This expedition had for its object the destruction of Harrison's command. As will be seen from the intercepted dispatches from him, herewith inclosed, it could not reach him without crossing the Washita River, at this point from one-half to three-quarters of a mile in width, and no boats of any kind in the vicinity to effect a crossing with.

Deserters, furloughs to favorites, etc., have already placed Harrison's command hors de combat. He cannot raise in his whole brigade 500 properly mounted and equipped cavalry, and the only regiments he had that were worth anything were taken from his command and sent beyond Red River.

The corn being burnt by us, and the horses and mules most thoroughly hunted up and taken possession of, he cannot pos-





J. D. LYONS,  
Q. M. Sergeant Third U. S. C. C.

sibly, this season or during the next year, subsist more than a scouting party on this side of the Washita River. A force of 100 men located anywhere on the west bank of the Mississippi River, can scout the country to Washita with safety, and would be amply sufficient to protect the whole country.

What may be true of the country opposite Natchez and from there to Trinity, I cannot speak of with any degree of certainty.

A force could operate now from Natchez to Tensas River even better than in the country through which we passed.

In and around Bastrop every resident has from ten to fifteen bales of cotton, which constitutes his entire property. If the Government would send steamboats to Washita City, properly convoyed by gun boats, 5,000 bales of cotton could be obtained from this class of persons, nearly all of whom desire to leave the country with their families and become loyal citizens of the United States.

It is but justice to the officers and men composing the expedition to say that the hardships of the trip were the most severe ever encountered by cavalry in this country. Anything less than their high discipline and determination would have failed to bring the expedition to a successful termination. To brigade commanders, and through them to every officer and soldier in the division, I desire to return my thanks for their indomitable energy and perseverance, as well as their soldierly conduct.

I am, Captain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel Third U. S.*

*Colored Cavalry, Commanding.*

CAPTAIN F. W. FOX,

*Assistant Adjutant-General,*

*Department of Mississippi.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XLVIII, Part 1.)

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## CHAPTER XXII.

EXPEDITION DOWN THE RIVER FROM MEMPHIS, TENN., TO FORT ADAMS, MISS., APRIL, MAY AND JUNE, 1865.

The war was practically over. General Lee had sheathed his sword at Appomattox. The great Army of Northern Virginia

had stacked arms. The Union forces were in possession of the Confederate Capitol. The President of the Confederacy was a fugitive, fleeing from the wrath of his enemies. The rebels who were still in arms, were looking for that proverbial last ditch, indulging the hope that they would find it west of the Mississippi River, where, united with the army of the trans-Mississippi, they would be able to continue the war indefinitely. But Uncle Sam's gun-boats barred the way on the river, and the Union cavalry was everywhere alert.

There were rumors that Jeff. Davis was seeking a way to cross the Mississippi River, and set up his government in Texas, therefore there was a movement of troops all along the eastern bank of the river, as the following orders and correspondence show.

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TELEGRAM.

*Nashville, April 27, 1865.*

GENERAL WASHBURN, Memphis Tenn.

It is reported that Jeff Davis is endeavoring to escape across the Mississippi, escorted by a picked body of 500 Cavalry.

Keep scouts out in your front, and if he should attempt to pass near your command, intercept and capture him, if possible.

General Washburn will send this information to all commanders on the Mississippi.

GEO. H. THOMAS,

*Major-General U. S. Army, Commanding.*  
(Rebellion Records, Vol XLVIII, p. 281.)

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HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI,

*Vicksburg, Miss., May 1, 1865.*

BRIG. GEN. J. W. DAVIDSON,

*Commanding Dist. of Natches.*

I enclose for your information a copy of a telegram from Major-General Thomas, just received here. It would appear most likely that Jeff Davis might attempt to cross in the vicinity

of Grand Gulf, Rodney, or Bruinsburg, or in that of Jackson Point, or Fort Adams, or Tunica Bend. You have already a garrison at Rodney, and I shall not send to that vicinity, to land at Bruinsburg, all the mounted men I have here (about 400) and some dismounted cavalry. The latter will probably proceed up Bayou Pierre to Port Gibson, and the former will make a circuit to the rear of that place, with a view also of capturing Capt. Glenney, the naval traitor, who is there. Brig. Gen. Osband has this moment reported here with 450 men of his regiment from Memphis for the same duty. I send him to you to be used to intercept Jeff. His service in this Department is only temporary. It appears most important that the Navy should patrol actively, and especially that Capt. McCauley should carefully guard the mouth of Bayou Pierre, as there are one or two cotton boats up there, which Jeff might seize and attempt to run out with a guard of his cavalry dismounted.

I think McCauley ought to require for the present that every cotton-trading boat in his district should be closely under his guns.

A gun-boat ought also guard the mouth of Big Black, as there is a small canal propeller belonging to Mr. William Butler up there. Osband will leave here at midnight to-night.

Respectfully,

N. J. T. DANA,

*Major-General.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XLVIII, p. 282.)

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THE EXPEDITION STARTS DOWN THE RIVER.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, or the effective force of it, 500 men and officers, then stationed at Memphis, Tenn., embarked on the Steamer John Raine and two large barges, the barges being taken in tow.

The steamer's capacious cabin afforded good quarters for the officers, while the men were well provided for in other parts of the boat. The horses were put aboard the barges. These barges had been in the service of the Mississippi Marine Brigade, and were fitted up especially for the transportation of cavalry. The

command left Memphis the latter part of April, 1865, Colonel Osband commanding. The destination of this expedition was Fort Adams, about 600 miles below Memphis, and about 15 miles north of the Louisiana State line. The run down the river was uneventful. Short stops were made at Vicksburg and Natchez. At the last named place Colonel Osband reported to General Davidson, commanding the district of Natchez, and in whose district the command would operate. After taking on a supply of rations and forage at Natchez, the expedition continued on down the river to Fort Adams, where a camp ground was selected and the troops disembarked.

Fort Adams is situated on the east bank of the Mississippi River, in Mississippi, and about 15 miles north of the Louisiana State line.

The name of this place would seem to indicate that it was a fortified position, but no fortifications were visible. Perhaps back in the days of Spanish rule some sort of fort may have been established at this point. At the time of which we write, however it was simply a landing place for steamboats, where people brought their farm products, cotton, etc., for shipment to New Orleans. A few dilapidated buildings comprised all there was of the place. One of Uncle Sam's gun boats rode at anchor out in the river opposite the landing.

On account of the high bank along the river front, the gunboat would be of little use to us in case of a land attack, but it was good company and filled the command with a greater sense of security.

The object of this expedition was, as outlined in the foregoing letter from General Dana, to patrol the country along the river front, scout the interior, and be on the alert to discover any attempt by the enemy to concentrate troops in that vicinity, and to prevent parties from crossing the river, especially Jeff. Davis. The command had a sort of roving commission, being authorized to land troops at any threatened point and scout the country.

✓ The camp was soon put under perfect military government, picket lines established and day and night patrols kept constantly out, covering the river front for miles above and below the camp. These patrols consisted of a company each, commanded by one or more commissioned officers.



Many people came to the landing from the adjacent country, some to beg permits to ship their cotton to New Orleans, others to sell their farm products—butter, eggs and vegetables to the soldiers, and many of them, through curiosity, to see the “Yankee” soldiers.

On May 16th our steamer, the *John Raine*, returned to Natchez for rations and forage, and Colonel Osband took leave of us, going up on the boat, he having been assigned to duty as Post Commander at Jackson, Miss.

On taking leave, Colonel Osband turned the command over to Major Main. Up to this time the companies, separately, had done a good deal of scouting and patrol duty, but had met no enemy, and the monotony of routine duty was becoming irksome, when an incident occurred that instilled new life into the command. It was on a dark, rainy night, the camp being as still and quiet as a graveyard; all save the sentinels were wrapped in profound sleep, when a distant shot rang out on the still night air, followed almost simultaneously by several volleys in quick succession, which brought every man to his feet. Then ensued the usual scenes incident to a night attack—officers shouting “Fall in,” the hurried movements of the men buckling on their arms, mingled with the pawing and neighing of the horses, as they, too, trained in the school of war, scented the danger. All, for one brief moment, presenting a scene of seeming confusion, out of which, however, like magic, came order, and where, but a few seconds before all seemed chaos, we now behold, indistinctly outlined in the gloom, a steady, compact line moving out in the darkness among the trees. With steady step and senses alert they swing into line on the crest of the hill, where a halt is made pending further developments. The firing, after the first volleys, dwindled to a few scattering shots, which seeming to come from a greater distance, indicated that our patrol was not being driven in. A courier soon arrived, bringing word from Captain Coykendall, commanding the patrol on the down river road, that he had encountered a force of rebel cavalry, with whom he had a sharp skirmish, the enemy retreating. It was later ascertained from Captain Coykendall himself that his patrol had run into a force of the enemy in the dark, that in the skirmish that followed they had become considerably mixed up, that there had been a good

deal of firing on both sides, with what result was not known, as the enemy all got away in the darkness.

The next morning, on looking over the ground where the skirmish took place, a pair of saddle-bags was found, which contained a Confederate Major-General's uniform coat and a pair of silver spurs. On the spurs was engraved the name "J. B. Hood." This was a startling revelation to us, and led to many conjectures as to what it portended. It seemed to be convincing proof that the great Confederate General bearing that name had been one of the party encountered by our patrol, and if so, what was the object of that midnight foray? Rumors of a somewhat vague nature had already reached us that a brigade of rebel infantry were somewhere in the vicinity of Woodville, where they were building boats and barges to be transported over land to the river, where they were to be used to cross their troops over to the west side. It was, therefore, determined to make a reconnoissance in that direction, and early on the following morning, taking two days' rations and an ample supply of ammunition, we moved out, taking the road to Woodville.

Woodville is situated about 20 miles east of Fort Adams. The adjacent country was fertile and the people prosperous, and, having escaped the ravages of war to a great extent, provisions were comparatively plentiful, and it seemed not improbable that a force of the enemy might be concentrating in that neighborhood for the purpose of crossing the river to join their forces in Texas. Moving cautiously for the first few miles, and seeing or hearing nothing of the enemy, it was decided to make a rapid march on Woodville. The regiment was never in better condition for a brush with the enemy. It was on the hills of Woodville, in the preceding October, that the regiment made one of the most gallant and successful sabre charges of the war, capturing a battery of three guns. And when it became known that Woodville was our destination, the men sent up a round of cheers that must have convinced any one that the black regiment would prove equal to any task set before them, though they should be called upon to face twice their number.

Captain Emery, with his company, led the advance, with orders to let no mounted men precede him to carry the news of our approach. Several mounted men were overhauled on the road,

who represented themselves as citizens, but, as they had the air of soldiers, they were turned over to the rear guard for safe-keeping. When within a mile or two of Woodville the advance guard encountered a rebel picket of 15 or 20 men, who, disputing the right of way, were quickly brushed aside by a charge led by Captain Emery, scattering them in every direction, and capturing a number of them. One or two of them, however, being mounted on swift horses, dashed into the town, spreading the news of our coming. Taking the gallop, we soon reached a point from which we could overlook the town, which was swarming with rebel cavalry. There was great commotion among them, as they commenced forming on the outskirts of the town to oppose us. Giving Captain Emery another company, in addition to his own, and orders to make a slight detour and charge on their flank, I moved forward with the balance of the regiment, sabres drawn. Seeing the flank movement, and fearing they might be cut off from their line of retreat, the enemy fled precipitately, taking the Bayou Sara road.

On entering the town we were met by a delegation of citizens, who stated that news had just reached them of the surrender of General J. E. Johnston's army, and claimed that our attack on their soldiers was unwarranted, when they were told that it was our business to fight the enemies of the government whenever and wherever found in arms against us, notwithstanding the information they claimed to have received.

After a short halt in the town, we moved out, taking the Bayou Sara road, which we followed for several miles, and meeting no enemy, and gaining no information corroborative of the rumors we had heard of the concentration of troops in that vicinity, but on the contrary finding such rumors without foundation, we retraced our steps, going back through Woodville, near which place we bivouaced for the night.

Resuming the march on the following morning, we reached our camp at Fort Adams that evening without further incident.

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#### A NAVAL OFFICER'S EXPERIENCE ON HORSEBACK.

An incident connected with the scout to Woodville furnished a good deal of amusement to the officers and subjected the unhappy subject of it to no end of good-nature banter.

On the night of the attack on our patrol, Captain \_\_\_\_\_, commanding the gun-boat, hearing the firing, cleared his ship for action and prepared to render such assistance as he could in case of a general attack. The captain was a gallant officer, and, as he expressed it, "was just spoiling for a fight." Learning that a reconnoissance was to be made, the captain expressed an earnest desire to "go 'long," which was readily granted, one of our officers furnishing him with the necessary mount, a favorite charger, for the occasion. Our gallant naval officer found congenial company with Captain Emery, commanding the advance, who entertained him with recitals of cavalry raids, sabre charges and hand-to-hand encounters until he deplored the fate that consigned him to the narrow limits of a gun-boat on the Mississippi River, when, he felt sure, he might have won fame as a dashing cavalry leader. While thus picturing to himself the brilliancy of such a career and indulging in visions of martial glory, a rebel picket post was encountered, and he found himself face to face with the real thing.

The rebel yell rang through the woods, bullets cut the air around him, and he found himself borne along in the whirlwind of the charge.

The animal he rode was an old campaigner, and knew from long training what was expected of him, and at the first blast of the bugle he sprang forward, carrying his rider into the thickest of the fight. But the captain kept his seat like a veteran and came out of the fight unscathed.

In the charge at Woodville, however, he was not so fortunate. Riding with Captain Emery, who led the charge into the town, over rough ground, our naval hero, rising in his stirrups with uplifted sword, yelled defiance to the foe, when, evidently forgetting that he was not treading the deck of his gun-boat, he lost his equilibrium and fell sprawling in the road, face down, receiving some painful bruises and the temporary disfigurement of his handsome face. He was picked up and tenderly cared for.

He blamed the horse for his mishap, refusing to mount him again, so an old carry-all was procured for his conveyance back to camp.

On the 20th the following order was received:

HEADQUARTERS, DISTRICT OF NATCHEZ,

*Natchez, Miss., May 20, 1865.*

*Commanding Officer Third U. S. Colored Cavalry,*

*Fort Adams, Miss.*

Sir:—The Brigadier-General commanding directs that you will, as soon as practicable, embark your command, with camp and garrison equipage, stores, etc., for this point, reporting your arrival at these headquarters.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

B. F. MOREY,

*Capt. and Asst. Adjutant-General.*

In compliance with the foregoing order, the regiment was embarked on the 21st and proceeded up the river to Natchez, arriving there on the evening of the same day. On reporting to General Davidson, that officer ordered that the regiment disembark and go into camp, stating that he had made application to have the regiment assigned to duty in his district.

With the aid of a staff officer, by direction of the general, a good camp ground was selected in the outskirts of the city, where the regiment was put into camp. The order to disembark and go into camp at Natchez was a great surprise and disappointment to all of us. Our camp and garrison equipage and extra clothing had been left in Memphis, where the headquarters of the regiment was still located, as it was understood that our service in the district of Natchez would be only temporary. The officers and men had been without a proper change of clothes since leaving Memphis, and they were looking decidedly seedy. But there was no alternative, unquestioned obedience is the soldier's duty, growling his prerogative.

Reporting to General Davidson on the following day, he inquired regarding the proficiency of the regiment in drill, stating that he would ride out to our camp the next day, when he would like to see the regiment execute a few movements. General Davidson was a West Pointer and a cavalry officer of distinction,

was an authority on tactics, and cavalry was his hobby. His inspection of the regiment was therefore looked upon as an ordeal to be dreaded. When the general rode into camp the next day, accompanied by his staff, the regiment being mounted and in line, received him with the usual cavalry salute—sabres presented. After inspection, the general named a few exercises which he desired to see executed. At the conclusion of these exercises, the General complimented the regiment very highly on its appearance and proficiency in drill.

On May 23d the following order was received:

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HEADQUARTERS, POST OF NATCHEZ,

*Natchez, Miss., May 23, 1865.*

*To the Commanding Officer, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

*Sir:*—You will have 300 of your command ready to move this day at 12 o'clock m., with four days' rations. The command will be divided into three detachments of 100 men each, commanded by a competent officer.

The commanding officers of these detachments will report to headquarters, District of Natchez, for instructions.

M. Y. EMONS,

*Lieutenant-Colonel,*

*Commanding Post of Natchez.*

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LATER ORDER.

HEADQUARTERS POST OF NATCHEZ,

*Natchez, Miss, May 23, 1865.*

*To Major Main, Commanding Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

*Sir:*—In addition to the order sent you this morning, the General commanding directs that you command one of the detachments, and that each of the other detachments be commanded by a reliable officer. You and the two officers commanding de-

tachments will report in person to Brigadier-General J. W. Davidson at 12 o'clock m., this day, leaving your commands in camp ready to move.

M. Y. EMONS,  
*Lieutenant-Colonel,*  
*Commanding Post of Natchez.*

Captains Emery and Haynes were detailed to command, respectively, two of the detachments called for in the foregoing order, and at the hour designated we reported to General Davidson, receiving verbal instructions as follows: To take charge of a train of sixty wagons, four and six mules to a wagon, then in readiness to move, proceed with them to a designated point about forty miles from Natchez, where it was reported a large amount of cotton was stored, the cotton the property of the Confederate States Government, which, when found, was to be loaded on the wagons and sent back to Natchez, under a suitable guard. Major Main to retain command of the three detachments until the cotton was secured, when the detachments were to separate, the commanding officer of each to carry out his respective instructions, which were to proceed to designated county seats and secure the public records of same and take them to Natchez, a number of wagons being allotted to each detachment for this purpose. Moving out about fifteen miles that afternoon, the command camped for the night.

General Davidson introduced two men to Major Main, who were to accompany the command as guides. These men were citizens, whom the general had employed on account of their knowledge, or rather pretended knowledge, of the country. During the first day's march these men were questioned regarding the country, the roads, and the location of the cotton, but the information, or rather the lack of information, to be gained from them excited doubts as to their trustworthiness, and a watch was set on them, which developed the fact that they were simply acting a part, in fact, that they possessed no knowledge of the country or of the existence of any cotton belonging to the Confederate Government. These men had learned by some means that a wealthy family living in that vicinity had in their possession a large sum of money—gold—which they had planned to possess

themselves of, in furtherance of which they fabricated the story about the cotton, that they might be employed to accompany the command as guides. . .

The true character and purpose of these men was discovered while in camp the first night out, when they were forthwith arrested and kept under close guard until the command returned to Natchez, where they were turned over to General Davidson, with a statement of the facts.

Marched at daylight on the morning of the 24th. The day was extremely hot, and the long train of sixty wagons made progress slow, but we reached the neighborhood where the cotton was reported to be, and camped for the night. On the 25th scouting parties were sent out to search for the cotton, but none could be found. It was conclusive evidence that there was no truth in the story the men had told about the cotton.

On the afternoon of the 25th the command separated, each detachment going in different directions to carry out their respective orders. The work assigned to these detachments was successfully accomplished, all returning to Natchez on the 27th.

On the return to Natchez all were delighted at the receipt of the following order :

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HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI,

*Vicksburg, Miss, May 22, 1865.*

SPECIAL ORDERS, No. 165.

*Extract.*

11. The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry are hereby relieved from duty in the District of Natchez, and will be put en route for Vicksburg. On its arrival, the commanding officer will report for further instructions at these headquarters.

The Quartermaster's Department will furnish transportation.

*By order of Major-General Warren, .*

FREDERICK SPEED,

*Asst. Adjutant-General.*

OFFICIAL.

W. H. H. EMMONS,

*Asst. Adjutant-General.*

*Commanding Officer Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

*Through Headquarters, District of Natchez.*



(REPORT OF BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL E. D. OSBAND.)

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY EXPEDITION.

*Fort Adams, Miss., May 6, 1865.*

*General:*—I have the honor to report that in pursuance to orders, I arrived at this point on the morning of the 3d instant; disembarked the command, and in the afternoon of that day sent a scouting party down to Tunica Bend. Found nothing in that direction.

On the 4th instant I sent a party through Woodville to Jones' plantation, where I was informed some torpedoes were concealed. The officer in command, on his return, reported that the torpedoes had been removed, and that he had learned they were being broken up and the powder was being sold to the citizens.

Yesterday evening I embarked three squadrons, and landed them at Bayou Sara about 10 p. m., with orders to scout from Bayou Sara to Woodville and thence to this point.

From the gun-boat officers at Bayou Sara, I learn that Scott's brigade of Confederate cavalry, acting as escort to Jeff. Davis, are expected to cross the river between here and Bayou Sara in a few days; also that a force of 3,000 of our troops will be transferred from Morganza to Bayou Sara either to-day or to-morrow.

The Steamer Magnet brought information to the gun-boat Chillicothe (lying off the point) that Davis, with a small cavalry escort, had crossed the river at Quitman, a short distance above Natchez, on Sunday night last, but I do not credit this report.

Official communication has been received at Woodville of the surrender of General Dick Taylor's army to General Canby, and I think that the majority of the scattered forces in this vicinity will come in and surrender at this point.

I shall continue to operate between Fort Adams and Bayou Sara till I receive further orders from you.

I have the honor to remain, General,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Colonel Third U. S. Colored Cavalry,*

*Commanding Expedition.*

BRIGADIER-GENERAL J. W. DAVIDSON,

*Commanding District of Natchez.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XLVIII, Part 1, p. 254.)

## SECOND REPORT.

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY EXPEDITION,

*Fort Adams, Miss., May 14, 1865.*

CAPTAIN B. F. MOREY,

*Asst. Adjutant-General, District of Natchez.*

*Captain:*—I have the honor to report that I connected at Pickneyville last night with Colonel Fonda's pickets from Bayou Sara. Pickneyville is twelve miles from here, and as his brigade is engaged on this picket duty solely, I would, in the most respectful manner, suggest that they extend their pickets to the line of Buffalo Creek, relieving me from duty here. I make these suggestions for the reason: Ellis Cliffs, below Natchez, and a point in Dead Man's Bend, just below Glasscock's Island, are both good crossings, and, with the exception of the gun-boat patrol, must be entirely unguarded.

On the night of the 12th we destroyed a large yawl in Tunica Bend that seemed to have been much and recently used.

Yesterday, the 13th, we found and destroyed a large dug-out and yawl used just below here in crossing, but have not seen for two days any but paroled soldiers of Lee's army. All of General Taylor's men are leaving the country, and ten men can go from here to Liberty unmolested.

Great interest is manifested to learn what arrangement ought to be made with the freedmen. I have instructed the planters to go on with their work, and the Government would indicate its pleasure at the proper time. If any instructions can be given me they will unanimously comply the moment they are informed of the conditions required.

I will require fifteen days' rations for crew of John Raine, ten days' rations for detachment of cavalry, ten days' forage for horses, 1,500 bushels of coal for John Raine. I am, Captain,

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

E. D. OSBAND,

*Brevet Brigadier-General, Commanding.*

(Rebellion Records, Vol. XLVIII, Part 1, p. 434.)

## CHAPTER XXIII.

REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR BY FIRST LIEUT. FRANK W. CALAIS.

During the summer of 1863, the question of using the negroes as soldiers and allowing them to engage in the struggle then going on, the success or failure of which was to determine their future status—freedom or slavery—was being discussed in all parts of the country, and in no place with greater zeal than around the campfires of our volunteers.

The men who enlisted in 1861 for the war, began to think that their term of service was to be indefinitely prolonged.

Their experience at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg and other places, seemed to strengthen the argument in favor of giving the negroes a chance to exercise the right of citizenship promised them by the President's proclamation of emancipation. There were, however, many men, both in and out of the army, who had no faith in the negro as a soldier, besides there was a bitter and wide-spread prejudice against it. Seeing the danger in such a move, the Confederate authorities did everything in their power to discourage the use of negro soldiers. They outlawed the white officers of negro troops, declaring that they would not recognize negro troops and their white officers as prisoners of war. These influences deterred many from accepting positions in colored regiments. Fortunately, however, there were many young men in the Union army, who, having no rock-rooted prejudices to overcome, were willing to hazard the experiment and take their chances with colored troops.

In September, 1863, the War Department authorized the enlistment of a regiment of colored cavalry to be organized at Vicksburg. This regiment was first designated as the First Mississippi Cavalry of African Descent, but was subsequently changed to "Third U. S. Colored Cavalry." Major E. D. Osband, Fourth Illinois Cavalry, was commissioned Colonel of the regiment.

Colonel Osband was privileged to select all of his officers for the regiment, choosing nearly all of them from the Fourth Illinois Cavalry. These officers were commissioned and ordered on recruiting service, and they entered upon the work with a zeal that brought forth the best results. Company "A" was the first company mustered into the service, October 9, 1863. The officers of this company were: Captain, W. W. Webber; Second Lieuten-

ant Fourth Illinois Cavalry; First Lieutenant, Frank W. Calais, Sergeant Fourth Illinois Cavalry; Second Lieutenant, James S. Matthews, Corporal Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

The officers of Company A, also all the other company officers, were young, active men, enthusiastic, and soon had their companies so thoroughly drilled that many older regiments were put to the blush by comparison.

To start with, the regiment was inferiorly armed and poorly mounted. By raiding the government corrals, a sufficient number of old hacks, horses and mules were procured to mount the men on as fast as the companies were organized. But these mounts were deemed fit only for drill practice, and with no thought of taking the field with them. However, detachments of the regiment were frequently sent out with the white cavalry, and did very effective service. With such inferior arms and mounts, the regiment soon began to attract notice. In the early part of November, 1863, the companies then organized, A, B and C, with the battalion Fourth Illinois Cavalry, Colonel Osband commanding, were ordered to Skipwith Landing, about one hundred miles above Vicksburg. Leaving Vicksburg, the command marched to Haynes' Bluff, where we crossed the Yazoo River on a steamboat sent up for the purpose, from which point we marched through the country to Skipwith's Landing, where a permanent camp was established. From this camp we made frequent raids through that section of the country, driving out and dispersing bands of rebel cavalry, with whom we had many sharp encounters.

In the early part of December an expedition was organized to make a raid across the river, in Louisiana and Arkansas. The force for this raid consisted of detachments from Companies A, B and C of our regiment, about 200 men, commanded by Major Cook, a detachment of the Fourth Ill. Cav., 75 men, commanded by Lieutenant Main, all under command of Major Chapin. The command crossed the river on a steamboat, disembarking on the Louisiana side. Scouting through the country, going north up Boeuf River, we camped the second night on the plantation of a Mr. Merriweather, near the Arkansas State line, and about a mile east of Boeuf River, a dense swamp intervening between our camp and the river. The usual precautions in regard to pickets and camp guards were observed. A force of rebel cavalry being in the neighborhood on the other side of the river, learning of

our camping place, a force of 500 of them crossed the river during the night by means of a small ferry (scow), leaving their horses behind, and making their way through the swamp on foot, attacked us shortly before daylight.

We called camp early, some time before daylight, fed our horses, made coffee, and the men were standing around the camp fires, eating and talking utterly unprepared for a sudden attack.

Captain Emery, some other officers and myself were in one of the plantation cabins, when a crash of fire arms caused us to spring to our feet, the general movement causing the floor to give way. We rushed out as another volley and the rebel yell rang out along the fence in front of the main dwelling. The fires were quickly kicked out, and the officers rallied their men along the fence, on the other side of which the enemy were massed, pouring in a deadly fire. Captain Emery formed his men along the north line of the fence, where the fire was the hottest. I formed my company south of Emery's company, while Company G, Lieut. Taylor commanding, occupied a position between my company and Emery's. In this position we gave them as good as they sent, and I guess a little more, as they soon fell back across the road, taking shelter in the edge of the woods, where they kept up the fight from behind trees, in the deep shadow of which we could only locate them by the flash of their guns. In this position the fight was maintained for about half an hour, when I made a dash across the road with my company, where, in the woods, on equal footing with them, I got in some very effective work on their flank, causing them to fall back. At this point the other companies charged across the road, firing and yelling, which put the enemy to flight.

The Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment was camped at the gin-house, some distance from where the colored soldiers camped, and being less prepared even than the colored soldiers, they received the first shock of the attack and suffered severely, 13 of them being taken prisoners and several wounded.

While pursuing the enemy, and at a point near the gin-house, my attention was attracted by someone calling out, "Don't shoot:" advancing, I found my old comrade, Oscar Randall, of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry detachment, lying at the foot of a tree, shot through the neck. He had fallen in the fight at the gin-house. I had him carried back to camp.

There were many instances of individual bravery displayed in this fight. Sergeant Turner, of my company, was out on picket with a squad of men, and, hearing the firing, brought his men in, flanking the enemy's line of fire. He lined up his men on the left of my line and fought bravely.

When my company charged across the road, Tony Price, another colored sergeant, led the left of my line, holding his men as steady as veterans.

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SCOUTING THROUGH THE CANE BRAKES OF MISSISSIPPI.  
BETRAYED BY HIS OWN DOG.

Rumors having reached camp that a band of rebel cavalry were scouting about in the swamps northeast of Skipwith's Landing, for the purpose of surprising and capturing steamboats, a detachment of our regiment was sent out to kill, capture or disperse them. Reaching the neighborhood of their haunts, we marched and countermarched only to find that the enemy had gone, or that they had not been there at all. The advance guard would frequently exchange shots with small bands of the enemy, but no force demanding the attention of more than one company was encountered. Rebel scouts and spies hung on our front, flanks and rear, worried our pickets at night, and kept us on the tip-toe of expectancy all the time. No trustworthy information regarding the whereabouts and movements of the enemy could be gained from the people; all were in league against us and always misleading us. We were getting so disgusted with following this Jack-o-lantern that had we come upon a force of the enemy they would have been roughly handled. It was while in this mood that, coming in sight of a plantation house, a man was seen to leave the house and start to run across the field toward the swamp. The advance guard gave chase, but when they reached the field the man could not be seen; he had mysteriously disappeared, gone as suddenly as if the ground had opened and swallowed him. The field was cut with open ditches, and was overgrown with tall grass and weeds. The men scattered in search of the fugitive, but in the meantime some of our men had gone to the house, where, finding a bloodhound tied there, they turned him loose. The dog, on being freed from his leash, scented the track of his

master, and, bounding away, baying at every jump, disappeared in the tall grass, following his master's trail. The man now seeing that the dog would betray him, left his hiding place and started to run for the canebrake on the other side of the field, where he hoped to evade pursuit, but, failing to halt after repeated calls, he was shot.

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ORDERED BACK TO VICKSBURG.

In January, 1864, the command was ordered back to Vicksburg, going into camp at Haynes Bluff, 12 miles above, on the Yazoo River, where we were engaged in scouting the adjacent country, frequently meeting the enemy, with whom we had some sharp fighting.

On the first of February, our regiment, or the organized part of it, about 300, joined the Yazoo expedition, Colonel James H. Coates commanding. This expedition embarked on transports, and, convoyed by several gun-boats, went up the Yazoo River to Greenwood, a distance of 200 miles. Much hard fighting and skirmishing was done during this expedition, which was full of interest from start to finish.

At Sartartia, Liverpool Heights, Yazoo City and many other places the troops were landed and engaged the enemy.

Reaching Greenwood on the 14th, the troops were disembarked and camped near the town, where the command remained until the 19th. From this point our regiment did some scouting, and had several lively skirmishes with the enemy.

On the 16th, the regiment was sent to Grenada, thirty miles distant, but did not get into the town, as the rebel General Forrest occupied the place with 6,000 cavalry. We drove in his pickets, with whom we had a lively skirmish, and then turned back. While at Greenwood our regiment camped on the plantation of a Mr. Strong, the male members of the family, however, being absent in the Confederate Army, but Mrs. Strong and her two charming daughters dispensed the hospitalities of the house with genuine Southern grace. This was a typical Southern family. They seemed to be much attached to their slaves, especially to the "old mammy" who had nursed all the Strong children for two generations, and they felt confident that their colored people

would not leave them. But when the time came for us to depart, the lower deck of the steamer carried every one of them, conspicuous among them being "old mammy," perched on a pile of cotton bales, the happiest one of the lot.

Subsequently, Mrs. Strong visited Vicksburg to present her claim for cotton taken from her plantation, where she found many of her truant darkies, a number of whom returned home with her, among them "old mammy," now truly repentant, and more eager to return than she had been to leave home.

On the 19th the command embarked and proceeded down the river, arriving at Yazoo City on the 28th, where the troops were disembarked, the infantry going into camp on the river front, while the cavalry, our regiment, was sent out to reconnoitre and picket the roads leading into the city.

Major Cook, with a detachment of 40 men of our regiment, was sent out on the Benton road, where he encountered the advance guard of General Ross' Texas brigade, whom he charged, rushing them back onto the main column, which was thrown into confusion. Major Cook, finding that he had stirred up a hornet's nest, made a gallant retreat, falling back, fighting, until he reached a small redoubt near the city, where he made a stand, and being reinforced by troops from the city, the enemy were held at bay. In this engagement quite a number of Major Cook's men were killed and wounded, among the wounded being Captain Frank Cook.

It becoming evident that the enemy were concentrating a large force, and that they were closing in around us, Colonel Coates stationed his troops at the strongest points of vantage. Our regiment, or the major part of it, under Major Cook, and a detachment of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, under Major McKee, were stationed in and about the fort on the Benton road, while the infantry occupied positions in and about the city.

These positions were maintained with more or less skirmishing on the picket line until the morning of March 5th, when our pickets on all the roads were simultaneously attacked and driven in, and in a short time the fight became general all along our lines.

I was on picket with my company that morning the attack was made, and fell back to the fort on the Benton Road, where I took position in some rifle pits on the south side of the fort. Captain



Emery, with his company, occupied the rifle pits on the north side.

The enemy gradually closed in around us until we were completely surrounded. We could count the flags of eight rebel regiments as they came into position on the adjacent hills. They planted their batteries in commanding positions, and from cannon and small arms they opened a terrific fire upon us. Three times the rebel general demanded the surrender of the fort, coupled with the threat that, in case of refusal, no quarter would be given.

The officers of our regiment notified Major McKee that, in the event of the surrender, they would not be a party to it, that knowing what fate awaited them in the event of surrender, they preferred to die fighting with arms in their hands. But the brave Major had no idea of surrendering. He was not built that way. In the meantime there was a hot time in the old town, where our troops were fighting against heavy odds.

Towards the close of the day our forces in the city executed a flank movement that threw the enemy into confusion and final rout, giving us the victory.

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#### A PLUNDERED PLANTATION.

Returning from a leave of absence in April, 1864, I rejoined my company then stationed at Goodrich's Landing, La. During my absence, the First Battalion of our regiment, Major Chapin commanding, had been ordered to Goodrich's Landing for duty at that post, which was garrisoned by the Fifty-first and Sixty-sixth Regiments U. S. Colored Infantry, and the Second U. S. Light Artillery, colored. Colonel A. Watson Webber commanded the post. Our battalion remained at this post until September following, engaged in picket and scouting duty, and had many sharp encounters with the enemy's cavalry.

On my return from leave of absence I was accompanied by a friend, Herman Webster, of Joliet, Illinois, who came South to visit friends. He was a young man of education, and stood high in the estimation of the people of his home town. After spending a few days with me in camp, he accepted an invitation to visit some friends who were living on a plantation a few miles from our camp. It being considered quite safe within so short a distance of our camp, Webster rode out to the plantation unattended.

The morning following Webster's departure from camp, Colonel Webber received the startling information that the plantation Webster had started to visit had been raided the night before by a band of guerrillas, who had swooped down on the place, plundered it, set fire to the buildings, killed a number of people and carried away two white men. On receipt of this information, I was at once dispatched with forty men of my company, with orders to proceed to the scene with all possible haste, and, if possible, run down and capture or kill the marauders. Taking the gallop, I soon reached the plantation, where I found a scene that beggars description. The dead bodies of a number of negroes lay where they had been shot down, evidently when they were fleeing from the place. The storehouses containing the plantation supplies had been burned after being plundered. A large number of refugees and colored people were quartered on this plantation, many of whom, when the marauders appeared, fled in every direction, seeking safety in the fields, where they remained until daylight before venturing to return. Satisfying myself that my friend Webster was not there, he evidently having been taken away by the marauders, I resolved to follow them and rescue him, if possible. From the best information I could gather, I judged they numbered about 75 or 100 men, and all well mounted, and at least double my force. Riding at a sharp gallop, I reached Bayou Tensas, where I learned that they had crossed the bridge some time ahead of me, having two prisoners with them. At this point I found myself with only 18 men, the others having fallen behind, their horses being unable to keep up the pace at which I had ridden. Leaving one man at the bridge with orders to stop the others there as they came up, I crossed over to the other side with my remaining 17 men. I followed the trail of the marauders into the cane brake, where I found the dead body of one of the men they had captured. He was shot through the head, the body being still warm. With a horrible fear of also finding the dead body of my friend, we searched the cane brake for some time, but in vain, and deeming it too risky to linger longer in that vicinity, we retraced our steps. On recrossing the bridge, I found my men all there, those who had fallen behind having come up. After giving the horses a short rest, we proceeded on our way back to camp, and as we rode along

I was filled with sad and gloomy thoughts respecting the fate of my friend.

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IN THE CHARACTER OF A SCOUT.

Major Chapin was ordered to make a raid with the entire effective force of the battalion, the object of which was to break up and drive out the bands of marauders who were interrupting navigation on the Mississippi River, capturing, plundering and burning steamboats.

I preceded the command some twelve or fifteen hours, leaving camp the evening before, to reconnoitre and gather information respecting the movements of the enemy. I was dressed in citizens clothes, and rode a sorry looking horse, but he was better than he looked to be. I was also rigged out with an old dilapidated saddle and bridle, the latter having rope lines.

I rode the greater part of that night, when, it becoming difficult to follow the road through the woods, I sought a secluded place and lay down for a little rest, but the mosquitoes were so annoying that I could not sleep.

At the first indication of daylight, I mounted my horse and proceeded on my way. My night's ride had developed a keen appetite, and the question of procuring breakfast claimed my attention, and I resolved to stop at the first house I came to. Emerging from the woods about sunrise, I found myself in an open country and near a cluster of plantation buildings. Riding up to the main dwelling, I gave the customary hail, "Halloo, the house," which was answered by an old darkey, who made his appearance from one of the cabins. In answer to my inquiries, the old darkey delivered himself as follows: "Fo' de Lawd, massa, de white folks all done gwine way, so dey is, dey all skeered ter def uv de gonrillers. No pusens deah, sah, 'ceptin' me and de ole 'oman. Lite, massa, lite (this in native parlance was an invitation to dismount); de ole 'oman'll get yer sumptin ter eat powerful quick; dar ent much anyway; de white folks done tote ebrything off. Yes, sah, plenty corn an' fodder fer de hoss. Step rite in, sah, old Sam gwine ter tend de hoss."

I entered the cabin, when the old woman soon set some corn pone and bacon before me, to which I did ample justice. I gained

some useful information from these old colored people. Taking me for a Southerner, they professed great fealty to the Southern cause, telling all they knew respecting the bands of partisan marauders we were after.

Myself and horse being refreshed, I mounted and rode away. About noon that day, I fell in with a man going the same way I was. He was well mounted, carried a double-barrel shotgun and two large revolvers, and was dressed in a suit of home-made jeans, and withal was a pretty tough looking specimen of the bushwacking type. My shabby appearance did not seem to impress him favorably, and he paid little attention to me at first. Finally, however, he conversed quite freely on the state of the weather, the condition of the roads and the "craps." He seemed to take it for granted that I was a native, living thereabouts. In the course of our conversation, I remarked that the Yankees were in the habit of scouting out that way, and that we had better keep a sharp lookout. He said he knew where he was, that he had often scouted through there, and that no d— Yank could slip up on him. From this he switched off on the subject of the war, detailing some of his exploits and the daring raids his company had made, finally hinting at the raid in which my friend Webster had been carried off. He seemed to gloat over their fiendish work on that occasion, saying that they "knocked the chunk out of two Yanks on that raid, that they lost them in the cane brake." The fellow seemed inclined to do all the talking, so I remained an attentive listener, gaining some important information.

Finally, the fellow asked where I lived and where I was going. I hesitated in framing my reply. I might venture on dangerous ground, which would lead to unpleasant developments, when, looking up with a reply on my lips, I caught the fellow's scowling gaze fixed upon me, and the words were never spoken, for at that instant he said, with murder in his eye, "Who in h— are you, anyway?"

Instantly I realized that the issue was made, that nothing I could now say would appease the bloody intention of this man, that the time for action had come. His gun rested across the saddle in front of him, the muzzle pointing from me. Quick as a flash, and before his last words died on his lips, I seized the gun with one hand while with the other hand I drew the revolver from

my bootleg and put a bullet through him before he could wrest the gun from me. With the report of my pistol he threw up his hands and fell from the saddle. With another shot I killed his horse as he started to run away, then dismounting, I broke his gun against a tree, and taking his revolvers, rode away, not stopping to see whether the man was dead or not. At any rate, I had killed his horse and disarmed him, putting it out of his power to follow me.

I joined the command late that night at Ashland Landing, and reported to Major Chapin. From this point I accompanied the command, riding with the advance and taking part in all the skirmishes that followed.

On the homeward march, I left the command at Jose Bayou, where it camped for the night. On the following morning, getting permission from Major Chapin, I started out to learn the truth or falsity of the statement made by my late traveling companion respecting the fate of my friend Webster.

Taking a short cut across the country, I reached the bridge over Bayou Tensas that afternoon, where I had previously gone in search of my friend. Carefully reconnoitering, I crossed the bridge and commenced my search through the cane brake. After following various trails and finding nothing, I was about to give up the search, when my attention was attracted to a flock of buzzards fluttering around in the top of a dead tree, which stood some distance away and where I had not been. Riding hither, I found unmistakable evidence of the fate of young Webster. Bones stripped of all flesh, the work of the buzzards, a few fragments of clothing, and some leaves from his diary, was all that was left of Herman Webster, my old schoolmate and friend. A bullet hole in his skull told only too well how he met death.

Had I felt any conscientious scruples for putting a bullet through my late traveling companion, standing here in this presence, viewing the bleaching bones of my life-long friend, all such sentiment would have vanished at once. The painful duty of acquainting the old father and mother of the cruel fate of their son seemed the hardest part of all. They had already given one son to their country—sacrificed on the altar of the Union; and now Herman, their only hope and stay, was taken from them.

I could only find relief in the thought that I would not be there

to witness their grief when the sad news reached them, though my heart went out to them in deepest sympathy. Had he fallen as a soldier, fighting in honorable warfare, they would bear the loss with Spartan fortitude and submission, but the black shadow of his cruel and untimely death, appealing for mercy, would be ever present to darken and sadden their declining days.

Returning to camp, I obtained permission to take my company and return to the place and bury the remains of my friend, which I did on the following day.

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#### CAPTURE OF A REBEL QUARTERMASTER.

##### HE HAD MONEY TO BURN.

Information having reached headquarters that agents of the Confederate Government were in the country east of the Mississippi River, known as the Yazoo Delta, buying up and collecting large quantities of supplies for the rebel army, Major Chapin was ordered to embark the battalion on a steamboat, which was sent up to Goodrich's Landing from Vicksburg for that purpose, cross the river and scout the country and destroy all supplies belonging to the Confederate States Government. Proceeding as directed, the battalion disembarked at a point near Skipwith's Landing, on the east bank of the river, and marched into the interior. The region through which we scouted was one of the richest in the South. In this section, abounding in wealth, rich in the sinews of war, the rebel authorities were gathering supplies for their destitute soldiers in the field. We found and destroyed large quantities of such supplies.

We met no force of the enemy sufficient to retard our march, only meeting small bands of rebel cavalry, which were quickly brushed aside, but they hung on our flanks and annoyed our pickets at night, and frequently fired from ambush. At one place we captured one of these purchasing agents, a Confederate Quartermaster, who had in his possession a large amount of Confederate money. The supplies were destroyed and the money confiscated. This quartermaster bewailed the loss of the supplies, but seemed to care little for the loss of the money, saying, "We have money to burn, but we need the supplies badly."

The object of the raid having been accomplished, the command returned to the river, where it embarked and was soon back in camp at Goodrich's Landing.

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A DRUMHEAD COURT MARTIAL. SWIFT JUSTICE AND A SHORT SHRIFT.

Following in the wake of every army, as sharks follow a doomed ship, are always found a horde of human vultures, who, hyena-like, prowl over battlefields, despoiling the dead, preying on the defenseless and profiting by the misfortunes of others. These species of the genus coyote, known in the army as the "cotton buyer," was conspicuously in evidence during our great civil war. Whenever and wherever any portion of the army moved, he was sure to be present. When the army advanced he followed. When the army fell back he took the lead. Like his prototype, the coyote, he took precious good care to keep out of danger. His ambition was cotton, to get which, either by fair means or foul, was the dream of his life. His suave and fawning manner, his boasted patriotism and pretended love for the Union, won favor at headquarters, giving him the freedom of the camp, and, in fact, about all other privileges he felt inclined to take. The man of doubtful or unproclaimed loyalty was not permitted to ship his cotton, the value of which at current prices, if realized on, would make him comfortable, and so in sight of all this wealth he and his family starved for the ordinary necessities of life, while our bunko man, the *loyal cotton buyer*, could ship his cotton and no questions asked. When and how he got the cotton, the price paid, etc., were known only to himself and perhaps one or two others. These shady transactions were never made public. They will go down to posterity as unwritten history of the war.

The glitter of his gold corrupted officers and men, tempting them from the path of duty and rectitude, and bringing many to shame and degradation, while he who worked their ruin, the beneficiary of their wrong-doing, walked with head erect, untouched by the blight of scorn.

On a certain occasion a lieutenant in the army, whose name, for obvious reasons, is withheld, was approached by one of these pests of the army, who offered him a large sum of money—

\$500.00—if he would disclose the hiding place of a certain lot of cotton, the officer being supposed to possess the secret. The lieutenant assured the anxious trafficker in contraband goods that he could lead him to even a larger amount of cotton than had been named, but that he must have the money first. So another officer was called as a witness, and the money paid over, when the lieutenant conducted the cotton buyer to a place on the wharf where a large amount of cotton had been collected for shipment, and pointing to it, said, "There is all the cotton you are looking for," and walked away, leaving the briber utterly dazed at the audacity of the thing. That the seeker after contraband cotton did not take this huge joke submissively is shown by the fact that he entered a complaint against the officer, which resulted in a court martial and conviction, sentencing him to be dismissed from the service with loss of pay, etc.

This officer was one of the bravest soldiers in the army; enlisting in 1861, he had been promoted through all the grades to the rank of First Lieutenant. Surely the long and faithful service of this officer, his unswerving patriotism and devotion to duty, merited kinder consideration at the hands of the reviewing authority. What, then, was his reward for long years of arduous and dangerous service? Degraded, a stigma put on his name, his pay—the little pittance faithfully earned at the risk of life and limb, withheld from him, his future prospects ruined, broken in health and spirit, he is kicked out like a worthless tramp. The other officer implicated in the joke, for joke it really was, the money being refunded, died before the case came to trial.

This and similar cases rendered cotton buyers and camp followers extremely unpopular in the army. This nefarious traffic grew to such an extent and caused so much trouble that General Grant issued orders forbidding speculators of all kinds entering his lines. It was reserved, however, for the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry to put an effective quietus to the traffic, though not till murder had been added to their other crimes.

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SOLDIER STABBED BY COTTON BUYER.

In the summer of 1864 our regiment was camped at Vicksburg down on the river front, below the old warehouse which was



used to store ordnance in. The guarding of this building devolved on our regiment, a special detail for that purpose being made daily. The combustible nature of the material stored in the building required close watching, therefore the instructions to the guard were very strict in the matter of allowing any one near the building.

This guard was approached one day by a well-dressed man, who disputed the right of the guard to stop him, stating that he had a right to go where he pleased. The guard, however, barred the way, when the man sprang upon him and cut him with a dirk, inflicting a wound from which he died.

The man was taken into custody by the officer of the guard and placed in the guard house. The whole regiment became greatly incensed at the outrage, and threats were freely made. Colonel Osband being temporarily absent, Major Cook took the matter in hand, called the officers together and organized a court martial. The prisoner being brought before the court, proved to be one of the obnoxious cotton buyers. The court, after hearing the evidence pro and con, returned a verdict of willful and unprovoked murder, assessing the penalty to be death by immediate hanging, which was carried out by hanging the man to a telegraph pole near the scene of the murder.

When Colonel Osband returned to camp, he was fully informed of the matter, and the written proceedings of the court martial placed in his hands, who in turn forwarded same to headquarters. There was some talk of an inquiry being made, but nothing further was ever heard of it. After this example of summary justice, cotton buyers found the business unprofitable around Vicksburg.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

REMINISCENCE BY LIEUTENANT EDWIN FARLEY.

*The innate goodness of women and the peculiarities of human nature.*

Every Union soldier whose fortune it was to invade the enemy's country during the war between the States, can testify to the unquestioned loyalty of the women of the South to the cause

of secession, and cannot fail to remember how, like their sisters in all parts of the world, they had their opinions, likes and dislikes and expressed their views freely at all times and on all occasions when things ran counter to their ideas. Regarding all Union soldiers as the wicked invaders of their country, these zealous ladies, when excited by our presence, sometimes forgot the proprieties and hurled spiteful and ugly epithets at us.

Under fire of their scathing remarks it was often difficult to restrain our resentment and retaliate by talking back. But, be it said to the credit of the officers of the regiment, they never forgot the respect due to a lady, and, swallowing their resentment, wisely held their peace, knowing full well that, woman-like, they would have the last word.

The ladies of the South, God bless them, are as sweet of temper and kind of heart as can be found in any land under the sun.

A number of the officers of the regiment met their affinity in the Southland during the war, and, when the smoke of battle cleared away and the white-robed angel of peace resumed her sway, there were many happy weddings—links forged in the chain that now reunites the once warring sections in a common brotherhood. The writer deems himself fortunate in being one of these.

To illustrate the natural goodness of woman's heart, which predominates always, I will mention an incident that occurred during the war, and to which I was a party.

The great Grierson raid, that swept down through Mississippi, from Memphis to Vicksburg, in the winter of 1864-5, leaving death and desolation in its wake, could not fail to impress the people with the horrors of war, and no wonder then that they felt bitter against the authors of their distress and ruin.

The battle of Egypt Station had been fought and won. The garrison, together with its one thousand brave defenders, had been captured, and many killed and wounded. The Yankee raiders were flushed with victory, while the soldiers of the Confederacy and their sympathizing friends were correspondingly disheartened. From Egypt Station, our regiment was sent on a mission of further destruction, tearing up railroads, burning bridges and destroying the enemy's supplies, Vicksburg being our objective point.

About ten o'clock on the morning of January 2, 1865, we ran into an unexpected and superior force of the enemy at Franklin. The force encountered proved to be that of General Wirt Adams, which, by forced march, had crossed the country the night before to cut us off from the main command and capture or destroy us. This move of the enemy was well conceived, they chose their own position and mode of attack, were greatly superior in numbers, and had the advantage of preparations, being the first to attack.

The attack was a complete surprise to us, and that we snatched victory from what threatened certain defeat, is due to the cool head and bull-dog tenacity of Major Main, commanding the regiment, who, though almost whipped, would not acknowledge it, and who, for nearly two hours, gave and received sledge hammer blows, forcing the enemy to retire from the field, leaving his dead and wounded where they fell. I say that had it not been for Major Main's determination the enemy would have accomplished their purpose, at least so far as defeating us in battle.

In this engagement the writer was severely wounded, fainting on the field from loss of blood; fortunately, however, the timely attention of the regimental surgeon, Doctor Beadles, the flow of blood was stopped, which otherwise must have proved fatal. With my wounded arm bandaged and in a sling, I felt so much revived that I mounted my horse and proceeded on with the regiment. The ride of one hundred miles to Vicksburg was an ordeal I look back on even now with a shudder. My arm was badly lacerated, the muscles being torn and bruised, a stumble or misstep of my horse sent a shock all over my body. I suffered so much from the jolt of the horse that the advisability of my being left at some wayside house was discussed, but I would not listen to it, the chances of my falling into the hands of the enemy were too great, and as visions of Libby prison rose before me, I determined to go through to Vicksburg with the regiment.

The march led through a sparsely settled section of the State, the weather was cold, rainy, cheerless, and the long, dreary days and nights brought no surcease of pain to my wounded arm, precluding even the sweet boon of sleep. It was thus that one day, weary and worn out with pain and the loss of sleep, the bandages on my arm becoming loose, causing the blood to flow anew, it became necessary to stop at the first house we came to and adjust the bandages and procure fresh ones.

Captain Coykendall, Lieutenant Geary, and a detail of men from my company, conducted me to the door of a double log house near the road, which stood in a small clearing in a lonely, desolate region. Everything about the premises denoted neglect, poverty and want. Knocking and receiving no response, Captain Coykendall pushed the door partly open, when a shrill female voice within ordered us in harsh tones to go away, saying: "You nasty Yankees, don't come in here." My wound was bleeding profusely, and we had no time to waste in parley, so Captain Coykendall, pushing the door wide open, stepped inside, where an old woman, evidently about sixty years of age, was bending over a smoldering fire on the hearth. She was smoking a cob pipe and viciously stirring the embers with a wooden poking stick, in which she was roasting sweet potatoes. Shaking the poking stick at us as we entered, she exclaimed in an angry tone: "Begone, you Yankee thieves; I wish General Adams had killed the last one of you." As I was brought into her presence, however, smeared with blood and looking the picture of distress, a wonderful change came over the old lady; from a look of scorn and hate, her features softened to an expression of kindest sympathy, and advancing she said: "Come right in, you poor man," and to my companions, "Lay him carefully on the bed."

The first sight of distress had touched a sympathetic cord in the motherly heart of this dear old woman. She brought water and fresh bandages and carefully bound up my arm with that tender deftness peculiar to a woman's touch. She proffered the hospitality of her house, saying that she would take good care of me and see that I was not molested in any way, even by the Confederate soldiers should they come that way.

We were deeply touched by the old lady's kindness, and wanted to reward her, but she felt offended at the mention of it. But the soldiers had some coffee in their haversacks, all of which we left in the house, and for which we felt paid tenfold by the glad expression in her eyes. And so we parted with mutual expressions of good will.

## CHAPTER XXV.

REMINISCENCES BY FIRST LIEUTENANT A. H. CARSON.

I, with other officers and men having no mounts, joined the Yazoo expedition at Yazoo City, February 10, 1864, going up the river with Colonel Osband and that part of the regiment not already with the expedition. We took our saddles and arms with us, it being proposed to mount us on stock which had already been captured by the command.

At Greenwood we were furnished mounts, horses and mules, which had been captured. Many of these animals were raw, unbroken animals, but our men being good riders, these animals were soon made manageable.

On the 16th we started out on a scout with the regiment, Colonel Osband commanding. The column headed toward Grenada, the object being to locate the rebel cavalry under General Forrest, and, if possible, open communication with the cavalry force of General Smith, who was marching south from Memphis to form a junction with the army under General Sherman, then threatening Jackson, Miss. Nothing occurred to seriously impede our march until we were within a few miles of Grenada, when we encountered a considerable force of rebel cavalry, who stubbornly resisted our advance, but after a sharp skirmish they were driven back. Fortunately for us, however, we here learned that General Forrest was then in Grenada with his entire command, 5,000 or 6,000 strong. So our little force made a right-about face and started back to Greenwood, which place we reached at 2:30 the next morning, having marched 82 miles, the greatest distance, I think, the regiment ever marched without rest. This distance was verified by information obtained from citizens living in and about Greenwood, a memorandum of which I made at the time.

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A SCOUT TO CARROLLTON AND BLACKHAWK.

On the morning of February 19, 1864, Major Cook, with a detachment of 200 of the regiment, was ordered to proceed to

Carrollton and Blackhawk, while the balance of the command embarked and proceeded down the river to Sidon, where they were to wait for us. Major Cook left Greenwood before it was fairly daylight, and moved rapidly toward Carrollton, an interior town about 15 miles from Greenwood. On nearing the town our force was divided, one division of it making a circuit, entered the town from the rear to cut off retreat, while the other division charged directly into the town. These movements were so quickly executed that the rebels were completely surprised and unable to escape. When we entered the town, we found all the male population, including several rebel recruiting officers and numbers of rebel soldiers, assembled at the court house, where they had met to exchange congratulations on being spared a visit from us, having received information that the "Yankees" had gone, bag and baggage—taken to their boats and sailed away down the river. Their amazement, therefore, was great at our sudden appearance among them. The women were well-nigh paralyzed with fear, and the men stood speechless—dumbfounded in our presence. This was their first sight of the Yankees whom they had been led to believe were monsters of cruelty, respecting neither age nor sex, the despoilers of their homes and country.

But after the first paroxysm of fear had passed away and they regained their senses, seeing that perfect order and discipline was maintained, and that they were being treated with kindness and civility, a change came over them. They were greatly surprised, expecting violence and outrage, they were receiving only kindness and protection.

It was a revelation to them, so contrary to the teachings of the advocates of secession, that they could hardly believe the senses of their own eyes. When we took our departure, the people bade us a friendly adieu, saying that our soldiers had been more orderly than their own.

The rebel recruiting officers and soldiers found in Carrollton were, of course, treated as prisoners of war and taken back with us to the boats.

Leaving Carrollton, the command pushed on to Blackhawk, where we captured another recruiting station, also quite a number of rebel soldiers, stragglers and furloughed men from Forrest's cavalry, not, however, without some slight skirmishing.

It being now almost dark, the command moved out about five miles and bivouaced for the night, having marched over forty miles that day.

Resuming the march on the following morning, we reached Sidon about 9 a. m., where we found the boats waiting for us, and embarking, the expedition started down the river, arriving at Yazoo City on the 28th.

When near Yazoo City, the cavalry was landed and ordered to move through the city and picket all the roads leading thereto.

Major Cook was ordered to take 40 men and make a reconnoissance on the Benton road, where he encountered General Ross' Texas brigade, with whom he had some lively fighting, Captain Frank Cook being severely wounded.

Major Cook retreated, closely pressed by the enemy, whom he fought every step of the way until he reached a small redoubt east of the city, where, being reinforced, the enemy were checked.

From that date, February 28th, to the morning of March 5th, the enemy kept up an almost continuous attack on our picket lines, and on the morning of the 5th, having been largely reinforced, they advanced and precipitated a general attack all along our lines.

At the beginning of the fight Sunday morning, March 5th, I was in the redoubt with the regiment, but was ordered by Major Cook to go back to our camp, which was north of the city, and bring up every man who was able to fight.

I succeeded in getting about fifteen men together, all of whom were complaining, but were not very sick. With these men, I started back toward the redoubt, but in the meantime the enemy had moved around on our flank and rear, cutting me completely off from the redoubt. I then started back toward the city, when I fell in with Lieutenant Farley, who like myself, was taking a squad of men to the redoubt. We joined forces and started back to the city, when we encountered the advance of General Richardson's forces, coming in on the Lexington road. We fought our way through them, losing three men killed and four wounded, and reached the city, where we found the streets barricaded with cotton bales, a precaution taken by Colonel Coates. We took position behind the cotton bales, and did good service in aiding to repulse several desperate charges of the enemy. Colonel Coates

procured a howitzer from one of the gun-boats, which he had placed in position to rake the streets, but when the enemy made a rush to take our position, the men in charge of the gun deserted it and ran back to the boat. Another gun-squad was, however, quickly procured, who handled the gun with splendid effect during the remainder of the day's fighting.

When the men deserted the gun, the enemy was pressing us hard at every point, and things were looking decidedly gloomy, but every man stood unflinchingly at his post, pouring in a hot fire on the enemy from every available point. The enemy made several desperate charges to carry our position, and were as often repulsed, and only yielded after ten hours of the hardest fighting I ever experienced.

The immediate cause of the enemy giving way was brought about by a flank movement executed by Lieutenant Farley and myself with such men as we could rally, with whom we gained a position on the enemy's flank, where, under cover of some buildings, we opened a raking and deadly fire, which threw that part of their line into confusion and, spreading, started a general stampede, leaving us masters of the field.

In the meantime a life and death struggle had been going on at the redoubt on the hill, Benton road, where Major McKee, with a detachment of the Eleventh Illinois Infantry, and Major Cook, with a detachment of our regiment, were holding a rebel force of ten times their number at bay.

We watched our flag with breathless interest as it waved over the redoubt. Its presence there meant everything to us, for had it gone down in defeat, the entire force of the enemy would have been hurled upon us, and vice versa. Our forces in the redoubt were equally encouraged by the determined stand our troops were making in the city.

Great credit is due to the bravery and unyielding determination of Majors McKee and Cook, who positively refused to consider any terms of surrender, though surrounded on all sides by ten times their number, and too, with many of their bravest officers and men killed and wounded.

Officers of less courage and determination would have yielded under such a pressure, but spurning the threat of the rebel commander to kill and spare not, they fought on with a sublime courage that challenges comparison.



I have always believed that, had the forces defending Yazoo City on that occasion been all white troops, the result might have been different, not that the Eleventh Illinois Infantry entertained for a moment any idea of surrendering, but from the fact that the colored troops, expecting no quarter, protested against possible surrender from the start, their officers declaring that they would not be a party to any terms of surrender.

With victory their only alternative, the officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry and those of the Eighth Louisiana, colored, would have died fighting with arms in their hands, whatever might have been the action of the white troops, but all honor to them, they chose to stand or fall with the black troops. The continuance of such an unequal struggle raises both white and colored soldiers to the height of heroes.

The officers of colored troops knew full well what they had to face when they entered that branch of the service, and when the test came they met it unflinchingly. Hence the record of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry shows no losses under the heading of "Taken prisoners." Their missing are accounted for in the list of "Killed in action."

In the Yazoo City fight, we lost two of our bravest officers, viz, Lieutenant Eugene E. Walter, brother-in-law of Colonel Osband. He was the joy and life of the camp and bivouac. Being a splendid singer, one of the Lombard troop, the patriotic songs he sang inspired all with a spirit that made the regiment invincible. Struck by a fragment of shell, his life blood ebbed away midst the smoke and roar of the conflict.

Lieutenant Archibald Stewart: Soldierly, manly and brave, a perfect type of the volunteer soldier, standing in the breach, conspicuous by his commanding figure, was shot in the head, his life blood oozing away as the conflict ceased.

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EXPEDITION TO JACKSON AND PEARL RIVER.

JULY, 1864.

Leaving Vicksburg, July 2, 1864, the command marched to Black River, where it camped for the night. Soon after going into camp, General Dennis, commanding, received information that the enemy were concentrating a large force in his front, and

desiring to communicate with General Slocum, in Vicksburg, I was detailed to carry the dispatch back to Vicksburg.

The mission was a hazardous one, and required a man who had some knowledge of the country, roads and byways. I had scouted the country pretty thoroughly between Vicksburg and Black River, hence my detail for the duty.

Bands of rebel scouts and spies were ever on our trail, and it could hardly be expected that a courier could go back to Vicksburg without incurring great risks, but I rather relished the prospect of adventure the trip offered, and readily accepted the detail. I was well mounted and had no fear of being run down. Besides the written dispatches I carried, I was made acquainted with their contents, so that in case of being captured, the dispatches were to be destroyed. It was ten o'clock that night when I left our camp at Black River. The night was clear, the stars shone brightly, but there was no moon. I rode along cautiously, keeping in the shadow of the trees that lined the road in many places, and reconnoitred before exposing myself in the clearer light of the open country.

I had covered about one-third of the distance to Vicksburg, when I stumbled upon a house standing in a small clearing, and was only advised of its close proximity by the baying of the dogs. On closer observation I discovered several horses tied to the fence in front of the house.

That there were rebel soldiers in the house seemed certain. The dogs had given the alarm, and I knew the soldiers would be out in a minute. I was too close to the house to retreat back to the woods, while in front I could soon reach the shelter of the timber on the other side of the clearing. So without a second's hesitation, I drove the spurs into my horse's flanks and dashed forward. As I passed the house, the rebel soldiers were already coming out, some of them on the porch and others running for their horses, and all shouting "Halt," "Shoot him," and the next second a fusillade of shots greeted me, but thanks to the darkness or bad marksmanship, their shots went wide of the mark. I could hear the clatter of their horses as they came on in pursuit, but I felt safe as far as they were concerned.

I had faith in the speed and endurance of my horse, who was covering the ground at a tremendous pace, and I could laugh at

pursuit, and sent back a defiant shout, the echo of which came back mingled with the report of their guns. I soon distanced my pursuers, who evidently gave up the chase, as I saw nor heard nothing more of them.

I reached Vicksburg without any further incident, and delivered the dispatches to General Slocum at four o'clock the next morning.

I rejoined the command at Black River the next evening, the 3d, returning with General Slocum and his escort. The General came to the front to assume command of the expedition.

Crossing Black River on the morning of the 4th, the command took up line of march toward Clinton. When near Clinton, the advance encountered the rebel cavalry under General Wirt Adams. The Eleventh Illinois Cavalry had the advance and drove the enemy through and beyond the town, where they made a stand and offered battle.

The Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, Major Cook commanding, was dismounted and sent to the right of the town to make a flank attack, when the enemy again retreated. The command camped that night near Clinton, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, or the greater part of it, doing picket duty.

On the morning of the 5th, the command marched at daylight, taking the road to Jackson, the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry having the advance.

The enemy were soon encountered and seemed to be in greater force than on the previous day. Our advance was stubbornly resisted, but we pushed the enemy back slowly. At this point the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry took the advance, relieving the Eleventh Illinois. We continued to drive the enemy for several miles, when he made a stand at a point where the wagon road crossed the railroad west of Queens Hill. We charged them, breaking their formation, and followed them so closely that their battery on Queens Hill dare not fire on us lest they kill their own men. Our support was too far in the rear to risk another charge, otherwise we could have taken the battery.

At this point we obliqued to the right, seeking cover in a strip of timber about 1,000 yards from the battery, where Major Cook formed the regiment and waited for the infantry to come up, the battery continuing to shell us all the time.

It was while in this position that Sergeant Joseph Sedgwick, of my company, was killed by a fragment of shell, which struck him just above the right ear. He was sitting on his horse at the time, next to me and on my left. The shell struck the ground in front of us, bounded over us and exploded on striking the ground in our rear, a fragment of it striking Sergeant Sedgwick, as above stated, killing him instantly. When he fell from his horse, I dismounted and hastened to him, but he was already beyond human aid.

Sergeant Sedgwick was one of the most promising officers in the regiment. His bravery, soldierly qualities and fitness to command, having been recognized, he had been recommended for promotion to the rank of Second Lieutenant. He was about 25 years of age at the time of his death. He enlisted in the 124th Illinois Infantry, August, 1862, at Aurora, Illinois, and served in that regiment until April, 1864, participating in all of the battles and campaigns of that regiment up to and including the siege of Vicksburg.

In 1864, he was discharged from the 124th Illinois Infantry for promotion in the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry. He was a perfect type of physical manhood, standing six feet in height, of a pleasing personality, attracting attention and winning friends wherever he moved. I was with him in many battles and campaigns when we were comrades in the 124th Illinois Infantry.

While we were in camp at Black River, the first night out from Vicksburg, Sergeant Sedgwick seemed to have a premonition that his end was near. He intimated to me that this would be his last scout. I endeavored to laugh him out of such an idea, reasoning that he was not well, and advised him to go back to Vicksburg and report to the doctor; but he would not listen to it, saying: "No, Kitt; I'm in good health; nothing is the matter with me; I only feel depressed. If I had a hundred lives and knew that I would lose them all by going on this scout, I would not now turn back."

When the infantry came up, the fighting was resumed, and we drove the enemy from his position on Queens Hill. Major Cook then sent Company F, Lieutenant Randall commanding, on a road to the left of Queens Hill and to the intersection of the road running north from Jackson to Canton, with orders to watch the

movements of the enemy, and to strike a blow if the opportunity offered. We struck the rear guard of the rebel column where the road we were on crossed the Jackson and Canton road. We charged them, capturing one ambulance, together with the team, four mules, and one prisoner, and killed one; we also learned that quite a number of the enemy were wounded.

The dust raised by the rebel column was plainly visible when we captured the ambulance. Receiving orders from Major Cook, we fell back, rejoined the command, and went into camp at some water ponds near Jackson, on the road leading to Vicksburg. The day was very hot; we unsaddled our horses, made coffee, ate our hardtack, then stretched ourselves in the shade to rest, when to our great surprise and discomfort, about 3 p. m. "Boots and saddles" sounded, and in five minutes we were galloping west on the Vicksburg road, led by Major Cook. The cause of this sudden and unexpected move was occasioned by a flank movement of the enemy. General Wirt Adams, having been reinforced, had moved around our flank, with the evident intention of getting in our rear and cut off our retreat to Vicksburg.

We met them about one mile out. They were coming in on our flank and rear. Our regiment was quickly dismounted and formed along a rail fence running east and west. The rebels advanced, mounted, across an open field. They greatly outnumbered us, and made several desperate charges to break our lines, but we held our ground for about two hours, when the infantry came to our support. The stubborn stand our regiment made on that occasion against greatly superior numbers, elicited the praise of the entire command. No veteran infantry could have stood that fire more unflinchingly. Every minute of the time, nearly two hours, we were under a galling fire. Splinters from the rail fence in front of us, cut by the enemy's bullets, flew in our faces. The officers walked up and down our line, cheering the men by word and example, conspicuous among them being the tall form of Major Cook. I remember one order he gave, which, though not found in St. George Cook's tactics, was nevertheless suitable for the occasion. It was this: "Give them hell, men," and I guess the rebels themselves thought it was pretty sulphury around there.

We had a large wagon train with this expedition, which the enemy made frantic efforts to cut off and capture, but we fought

them off and did not lose a wagon. We camped that night, July 5th, near Jackson, where we formed a junction with the column under General Slocum.

Marching at daylight on the morning of the 6th, the command moved toward Clinton, when the enemy was again encountered, being in increased force. This day was marked by some hard fighting, the infantry and artillery taking the leading part, the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry being incessant. The fighting continued all day, neither side gaining much advantage. At the close of the day, the command fell back and bivouaced for the night, the men lying on their arms.

On the morning of the 7th, the command moved at daylight, heading for Vicksburg. The enemy were on the alert, and the fighting commenced with the first movement of the troops. The enemy's cavalry swarmed all around us, and their artillery commanded every available position of advantage.

It looked as though we were completely surrounded, but the command fought its way through, gained the Vicksburg road, and then commenced a masterly retreat. The enemy made desperate attempts to capture our wagon train, but we fought them off while we ran the train past the danger point.

The command reached Vicksburg on the evening of the 9th, utterly worn out.

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#### A RAID IN THE DEER CREEK COUNTRY.

*An exciting chase. Could not shoot him, but knocked him off his horse and captured him.*

In the summer and fall of 1864, our regiment was stationed at Vicksburg, our camp being down on the river bank, below the old storehouse, which was used for the storage of ordinance, the guard for which was furnished by our regiment. While occupying this camp, we were kept pretty busy scouting the country in different directions. The extent and duration of these raids were governed by circumstances, sometimes covering but a few days, and frequently weeks.

That section of Mississippi lying between the Mississippi and the Yazoo rivers, known as the Yazoo delta, being somewhat iso-

lated from the active operations of the Union army, it being inaccessible except by boat from Vicksburg. It offered a comparatively safe field for the operations of bands of rebel cavalry, and also afforded a source from which to draw supplies for their army in the field. Furthermore, these bands of rebel cavalry seriously interrupted navigation on the Mississippi River.

From their rendezvous in the interior they would sally forth, appearing unexpectedly at unprotected points along the river, lay in ambush, decoy steamboats to land, capture, plunder and burn them.

After one of these successful raids, they had only to return into the interior, made difficult of pursuit by the numerous small streams, bayous and lakes intervening, chief among which were Deer Creek, Rolling Fork and the Sunflower. It was soon after a steamboat had been captured and destroyed by these bands of rebel cavalry, that the commanding general at Vicksburg sent out three raiding parties, two proceeding up the Mississippi River by boat, to land at different points and scout the interior.

While the third, 350 men and officers of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, and one small field-piece, Major Cook commanding, was sent up the Yazoo River, by boat, to disembark above the mouth of Deer Creek, and march into the interior, gain the enemy's rear, find their camp and destroy them. While the scouting parties sent up the Mississippi River would be in position to cut off the retreat of the enemy in that direction or northward.

On the morning of September 21, 1864, Major Cook embarked his command and proceeded up the Yazoo, disembarked that night after dark, in the woods, and marching about four miles into the interior, camped for the night. Marched the next morning as soon as it was light enough to see the road, going up Deer Creek on the east side.

Major Cook gave me the advance with twelve of the best mounted men in the regiment, with orders to let no rebel picket escape; in fact, to run down and capture everything in sight, the plan being to surprise the rebels in their camp. We moved at a rapid pace, the command held in hand for immediate action. When within about three miles of Rolling Fork, we came upon a rebel picket of five men, stationed at a cotton gin. We charged them on sight, capturing four of them before they could mount

their horses. One of the men, being mounted, fled. Turning in his saddle, he fired his shotgun, both barrels, at us, then, throwing away his gun, urged his horse with hat and spurs to his utmost speed. He was mounted on a fine horse, and led us a lively chase.

I fired the loads from both of my revolvers at him at about forty yards, my men also fired with revolvers and carbines when the turn of the road was favorable, but none of our shot hit him; he seemed to bear a charmed life. Finally, however, plunging the spurs into my horse's flanks, I made a burst of speed that brought me along side the fellow, when, seizing him by his long hair, I pulled him off his horse, sending him sprawling in the road. He struck the ground with considerable force. It was something like jumping off a train under full speed, and the momentum sent him spinning around like a top. On regaining his feet he was badly dazed, and, putting his hand to his head, looked around as one bewildered. Finally his gaze rested on me, when the true situation of things seemed to dawn on him, and he said:

"Yank, you're no good on the shoot, but you're the toughest wrestler I've ever tackled. Now you've got me, what you going to do with me? I s'pose my name is mud, but don't turn me over to them niggers. You may have that cussed horse of mine if you can catch him. I have always thought he could run, but he has lost me this race, and you can have him and welcome. The next time I want to get away quick, I'll walk. What's the use being in the cavalry anyway. Say, Yank, you've got us licked. It ain't fair to fight us with our own niggers."

Thus, I believe, he would have talked on interminably, but I cut him short by ordering him to mount behind one of the other prisoners. He obeyed reluctantly, saying that his head felt dizzy, besides he had quit the cavalry for good, and commenced to eulogize the infantry service, but seeing that his only auditors were his fellow prisoners, he relapsed into silence.

The picket we had captured had been sent out from the main body of rebels, who were at their headquarter camp on the Helen Johnson plantation, and who, hearing the firing, quickly decamped. However, we followed them at a gallop and overtook their rear guard, with whom we had a lively skirmish. The regiment coming up, we followed them, engaging in a running fight



for about fifteen miles, driving them across the Sunflower River.

In this skirmish we killed and wounded quite a number, and took 12 prisoners. Returning, we camped that night at the Johnson plantation, occupying the quarters the rebels had so lately and precipitately vacated, and which we destroyed the next morning, together with all of their camp equipage and stores.

On the following day, the 3d, we scouted up Deer Creek. During the day, we met a rebel captain, who, with 12 men, rebel soldiers, were driving 300 head of fat cattle, purchased for the rebel army. These cattle were branded C. S. In the skirmish that ensued, eight of these rebel soldiers were killed, the captain and the other four soldiers were captured.

We drove the cattle through to the Mississippi River, from which point they were shipped to Vicksburg for the use of the army. We reached the Smith plantation on the evening of the 4th, where we met the Fifth Illinois Cavalry.

On the 26th, we embarked for Vicksburg, going down the Mississippi. Thus we had made a wide circuit, covering a large scope of country, punished the enemy, and made navigation safer on the Mississippi River.

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THE EXPEDITION TO PORT GIBSON, NATCHEZ AND WOODVILLE.  
SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1864.

*I was detailed to act as Adjutant during this expedition.*

This expedition left Vicksburg on the night of September 29, 1864, on transports, and proceeded down the river. It was composed of the following troops: Fourth, Fifth and Eleventh Illinois Cavalry, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, one section of the Twenty-sixth Ohio Battery, and one section of the Second Illinois Light Artillery, all under command of Colonel E. D. Osband.

The object of the expedition was to break up a rebel force of cavalry and artillery, who were interfering with navigation on the Mississippi River. Just prior to the embarkation of this expedition, the Steamer White Cloud, coming up the river from New Orleans, was fired into by artillery and badly damaged, and the lives of many passengers endangered.

We made our first landing at Bruinsburg, Miss., where we disembarked, and marched to Port Gibson, near which place we encountered a small force of rebel cavalry, with whom our advance, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, had a skirmish, killing two of the enemy, and sustaining a loss of one man killed. The command camped near Port Gibson that night.

October 1st, marched at daylight, reaching Rodney that evening, where the command camped for the night.

October 2d, marched at 4 a. m., passing through Fayette about noon. Our regiment had the advance and, when near Cole's Creek, encountered a force of rebel cavalry, killing one, mortally wounding one and capturing five.

October 3d, marched at daylight, our regiment flanking the column. Major Cook having learned that a rebel picket of six men were guarding a lot of cotton stored in a gin-house, which was situated a few miles off our road, on the plantation of Jacob Thompson, Secretary of the Interior under President Buchanan, he suggested the idea of capturing the picket: I volunteered to take a few picked men and do the job. The Major acquiesced. I called on Captain Emery, commanding Company B, of our regiment, for a detail of six of his best mounted men. The rebel cavalry were hanging on our flanks, and it was more than probable that we would encounter some of them, in which event it would simply be a test of speed between us; hence my desire for good mounts and men whom I could depend upon in an emergency.

Captain Emery gave me six men, whom, he said, would be hard to catch, adding, "they can ride all over their horses, and will stay with you in a pinch." With these men, I struck out across the country, following neighborhood and plantation roads. The gin-house and plantation buildings stood in the middle of a large clearing. We got our first view of it from a cluster of trees, which screened us from view, probably about one-fourth of a mile distant. We could see no one moving about the buildings, and I concluded to make a dash. We succeeded in getting within about 200 yards of the gin-house before being discovered. As we dashed up, circling the building, one of the men, being mounted, fired on us, then fled across the field, followed by one of his comrades, who was on foot, the others taking refuge in the gin-house. Leaving two of my men to guard the building, I pressed on after

the fleeing men. The man who was on foot surrendered on being hard pressed, but the mounted man would have reached the woods and escaped but for a lucky shot from my revolver, which disabled his horse, and a second shot that broke his arm.

When I rode up to where he lay, his horse had fallen with him, he would have shot me, but his pistol missed fire, and before he could use it again, I struck the pistol from his hand with my sabre. Taking him back to the gin-house, we got our prisoners together, six of them, and started to rejoin the column.

I disposed of the prisoners by giving one in charge of each of my men, with bridle-reins tied to the pommel of their saddles. With this arrangement the prisoners had no control of their horses. They all had good horses, and we made good time.

During our absence the column had moved steadily along, and was, by this time, some miles in advance of us.

We regained the road over which the column had passed, and were moving along at a brisk gallop, when we unexpectedly ran into a squad of rebel cavalry in the road ahead of us, going the same way. There were twelve of them, so honors were easy as they counted, for they had not recognized the fact that half of my men were prisoners. They had dropped in behind our column, and were evidently looking for stragglers. We opened fire on them at sight without abating our speed, when they fled, returning our fire as they went. The road being fenced, they could not immediately leave it, and kept on ahead of us.

We had to threaten our prisoners with instant death if they attempted escape or made any sign of recognition to their friends.

We were wishing, therefore, that the party ahead of us would find a way to get out of the road and leave us a free passage, when firing in front brought us all to a stand. The rear guard of our column had loitered on the way, and hearing the firing, faced about and met our fleeing adversaries, who, now caught between two fires, submitted to the inevitable without further resistance. Thus adding twelve more to my list of prisoners.

On rejoining the command, I took the wounded man to our surgeon, who patched him up and put him in the ambulance.

We reached Natchez that afternoon, October 3d, near which place we camped for the night.

October 4th, the command was embarked on transports and,

at 6 o'clock that evening, proceeded down the river to Tunica Bend, La., reaching there at 4 a. m. on the 5th, disembarked and took up line of march toward Woodville, Miss. Marching about ten miles, heavy firing being heard in the direction of Bayou Sara, the course of the column was deflected in that direction, but the firing soon ceased, when the direct march to Woodville was resumed.

As the command came within striking distance of Woodville, the Fifth Illinois Cavalry and our regiment charged into the town, surprising the enemy, and capturing twelve men, one caisson, twelve army wagons with teams, and a large amount of commissary stores, C. S. Army. Moving out about four miles, the command camped for the night.

Having been ordered back to the boats with the prisoners, captured property, etc., I did not take part in the fight that took place the next morning, in which our regiment made a gallant sabre charge, capturing a battery of artillery and many prisoners.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE CONFEDERATE LIEUTENANT'S DREAM.

Lieutenant Joseph Randall, dubbed by his intimates "Big Joe," was the biggest man in the regiment, standing six feet in his stockings, an avoirdupois tipping the scales at 200.

He rode a very large horse and carried the largest size sabre. Rough of speech, loud of voice, almost boisterous, a very cyclone in a fight; but withal, kind and gentle as a girl when in peaceful repose.

The regiment was on a scout—engaged in a running fight with some of Forrest's cavalry. Lieutenant Randall, commanding his company, was leading the advance, and had got the enemy on the run.

A rebel lieutenant, poorly mounted, lagged behind, with Big Joe a close second, who, closing upon his fleeing antagonist, called a halt in no very polite terms, which the fleeing Confederates heeded not, but acting on the old axiom, "He who fights and runs away, will live to fight another day," renewed his efforts

to get away, shouting back that he thought he could make it. But Big Joe came thundering down upon him with such force that horse and rider were both sent sprawling in the road. As the plucky reb regained his feet, Big Joe remarked: "Well, you didn't make it, did you." "No," said the Confederate, "I thought I could, but something struck me. We can't fight giants mounted on elephants."

The captured Lieutenant being a gentleman, coupled with the philosophical manner he accepted the situation, won favor with his captors, and he was invited to share the meagre hospitality of headquarter mess, instead of being placed under guard with the other prisoners.

Around the camp fire that night, with pipes well filled after a supper of hardtack and coffee, the latter being a great treat to the captured lieutenant, he joined in the conversation that ensued. His fine flow of wit and good humor in recounting incidents of the day's fighting, and of his own capture, was amusing to a degree, keeping his listeners in a roar of laughter.

Gentlemen, said he, until recently, I have been deluded into the idea that the Southern Confederacy was the whole thing, but since a dream I had a few nights ago, that proposition has been knocked higher than Kilroy's kite. Resuming after refilling his pipe, he continued: In that dream, I seemed to be standing on a high eminence overlooking a broad, open plain, where were marshalled vast armies. A sea of glistening bayonets, so to speak, stretched away as far as the eye could reach. Presently an officer of high rank, presumably General Grant, followed by his staff in all the pomp and tinsel of war, appeared on the scene and gave this command: "Attention world, bynations right wheel."

Gentlemen, I made up my mind right there that the Southern Confederacy had run up against something, in fact, that it was doomed.

Speaking of his own capture, the Lieutenant said he would like to see the man who captured him. Asked to describe him, he said: "The man was about ten feet tall, carried a sabre as long as a fence rail, and rode a horse as big as an elephant. As he charged down upon me, he shouted in a voice of thunder, 'Halt, you rebel son of ——.' The next thing I have any clear idea of, I was rolling over in the mud."

Lieutenant Randall being sent for, was duly introduced to his captive, whereupon they fought the battle all over again.

One by one the tired officers stretched themselves on the ground, and were soon oblivious of passing events, while captor and captive, now as chummy as two school girls, swapped stories until the wee small hours.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

OLD ALF, THE WIZARD OF THE BLACK REGIMENT.

*Notes from the Secret Service of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.*

War brings into action all the latent force of a nation and develops the character of its people. The inherent energy of man reaches its highest standard in times of war, all the noble or vicious traits of his nature, coming to the fore, are bent for good or evil.

In the red glare of war, the obscure country lad and the dapper city youth oft times rise to the height of heroes, who under ordinary circumstances would go through life unnoticed. There is no condition in life that so severely tests a man's character as the trials and privations incident to an active military campaign. In our great civil war, every regiment developed its heroes, the majority of them coming from the ranks. Many instances are on record where men in the ranks performed noble deeds of daring, and it is not too much to say that men raised from the ranks, on merit alone, made the most efficient officers. It was this class of men who almost invariably led the forlorn hopes. Some of the most successful captains, colonels and generals sprang from the ranks. The ranks furnished the daring scouts, who were the eyes and ears of the army. It could hardly be expected, however, that men would be found in the ranks of the black regiments, who possessed the qualities that distinguished the white volunteer soldiers of the civil war, raising them far above the standard of any troops of which history speaks. But in the person of Old Alf, we will present a character who, though an exception, was a fair type of a considerable number of men found in the ranks of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.

There were many men in this regiment who performed deeds of heroism entitling them to special mention in these pages, but unfortunately their names cannot now be recalled.

The most notable among them, however, was Alfred Wood, better known as Old Alf. The appellation "Old," though, if ap-

plied in its true sense, was a misnomer, for he had not seen more than thirty summers. He being somewhat of an oracle, at least in the opinion of his own people, it is presumable that the term "Old" was tacked on as a sort of handle to the abbreviation "Alf."

Old Alf, then, as we shall call him, was of mixed blood, Caucasian, Indian and Negro, with the Indian characteristics largely predominating. He was six feet in height, straight as an arrow, clear-cut features, eyes black and piercing, and a lithe, sinewy frame capable of great physical endurance. Coupled with the cunning of the Indian, he possessed many of the nobler traits of the white man. The restless spirit of the Indian and the independence of the white man stamped him as one not born to be a slave. Obedient and faithful as a servant, it was, however, hard for him to acknowledge any man as his rightful and lawful master.

That the blood of an Indian brave of no mean degree flowed in his veins, was plainly apparent. He was of Choctaw origin, which tribe once held sway over the territory now embraced by the State of Mississippi, and when the march of civilization drove them back toward the setting sun—west of the great river, this descendant, having a taint of negro blood in his veins, fell a victim to the inexorable laws of Southern Slavery.

Up to the time of the promulgation of the emancipation proclamation, Old Alf had been the chattel of one Doctor Wood, who lived on his plantation in Mississippi. The Doctor prized Old Alf highly on account of his many good qualities, trusting him largely with the affairs of the plantation.

While Old Alf did his duty faithfully and well, his restless disposition led him into many difficulties, which frequently involved him in *heated discussions* with the Doctor.

The fullblooded negroes could be easily kept in subjection, but the blood of a different race ran in Old Alf's veins, and he could not be suppressed. The other slaves on the plantation were comparatively happy and contented, but Old Alf, without knowing why, chafed under the restraint, and indulged in visions of a different life. Thus Old Alf's life was spent until the monotony was broken by the thunder of the Union guns at Vicksburg, which, speaking in the voice of freedom, conveyed to his untutored mind its meaning, and aroused within him the warrior

spirit of his race. From that time Old Alf lost interest in the affairs of the plantation and began to devise plans for making his escape to the Union lines. Being allowed more privileges than the other slaves, and but little notice being taken of his actions, he was thus greatly favored in carrying out his plans for escape. Doctor Wood's plantation was situated in a region remote from the active operations of the Union army, and was inaccessible to Vicksburg, except by boat, being bounded on the west by the Mississippi river, and on the south by the Yazoo, with numerous small streams and bayous intervening.

The country was also patrolled by rebel cavalry, all the ferries and crossings being closely guarded to prevent the escape of the slaves.

It will be seen therefore how almost impossible it would be for a fugitive to run this gauntlet of rivers and guards, to make no account of the fierce bloodhounds that would be turned loose on his track the moment his absence was discovered. But what will man not do and dare to gain his freedom? We are furnished some notable examples of this in the bold and desperate breaks made by the union prisoners confined in the loathsome prison pens of the South.

The most abject and groveling slave in the South thirsted and longed for the God-given boon of freedom. How much more intense then must be the yearning for freedom of those in whose veins ran the blood of a race who never brooked restraint. Without knowing that the strong arm of the government had already sundered the chains that bound him, Old Alf set to work to emancipate himself, and the perils that beset his path to freedom weighed as naught in the balance. The bay of the bloodhound on his track would only quicken his step and nerve him to greater exertion, nor did he lose faith in the justice and eternal fitness of things, when men claiming rank in the highest order of Christian civilization joined in the chase.

By himself and unhampered, Old Alf had little fear of being captured and dragged back to bondage. He could take to the swamps and evade his pursuers; he could swim rivers and throw the bloodhounds off the scent, and laugh at pursuit. But dear as liberty seemed to him, he would not flee and leave his wife, Aunt Margaret, behind. His determination therefore to take his wife



with him increased the dangers and lessened his chances of escape.

Being familiar with the country and the position of the rebel guards, Old Alf laid his plans carefully, and on a dark night, mounted on one of the Doctor's horses, with Aunt Margaret up behind him, he set out on his perilous journey, braving death for freedom. We will not follow them in detail; suffice to say that, after undergoing many hardships and narrow escapes from capture, abandoning the horse and seeking safety in the swamps, they finally reached the Mississippi River, where, after laying in hiding for a time, they attracted the attention of a passing steamer, and were taken on board, and safely landed within the Union lines at Vicksburg.

Soon after arriving in Vicksburg, Old Alf secured employment as body servant to Colonel Osband, then captain commanding General Grant's escort, Company A, Fourth Illinois Cavalry.

In October following, the organization of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry was authorized by the War Department, and recruiting for the new regiment commenced, Old Alf's name being among the first on its rolls.

Old Alf was soon detailed as orderly at headquarters, and on the formation of a headquarter's mess, Aunt Margaret, who was a trained cook, was given charge of the culinary department, and well did she discharge the duty. If any of us were sick or wounded, it was the motherly hand of Aunt Margaret that ministered to our wants. During the early days of the regiment, Old Alf rendered good service in drumming up recruits, and while engaged in this duty he was allowed to go and come at will, having a pass good anywhere within the picket lines.

He was a close observer, and mingling with the people who thronged the city, his quick perception and keen insight into the motives of people, often led to the detection of spies and traffickers in contraband goods.

It was while engaged in this duty that he gave evidence of those qualities that subsequently made him famous as a scout. Being a superb horseman and a crack shot, quick to act and fearless, he was a match for the best rebel scouts. Possessing a thorough knowledge of the country, his services as guide and scout were of great value to the regiment in its frequent raids into the interior of the State.

## OLD ALF AS A SCOUT.—A DASH FOR LIFE.

In December, 1863, an expedition was organized to make a scout in Louisiana and Arkansas, starting from Skipwith's Landing on the east bank of the Mississippi. The force for this expedition was composed of a detachment of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, under command of Major Cook, and a detachment of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry, under Lieutenant Main, all under command of Major Chapin.

Embarking on a steamboat, the command was landed on the Louisiana side, about 30 miles south of the Arkansas State line. Old Alf accompanied this expedition as a scout. He was disguised as a plantation darkey, and sent out in advance to gain information respecting the whereabouts and movements of the enemy. He was mounted on a horse whose outward appearance would not impress any one favorably, he being thin in flesh and angular in form, but really possessed extraordinary qualities of speed and endurance.

On disembarking on the west side of the river, Old Alf, as prearranged, disappeared from the command, going to play the part of a scout, while the command moved out a few miles and camped for the night.

Old Alf was instructed to proceed into the interior as far as practicable that night, to communicate with the colored people and gather all the information he could respecting the enemy, who were reported to be in considerable force in that vicinity. Old Alf rode late into the night without meeting any one, or having an opportunity to gain information. He began to feel the need of rest and feed for his horse and himself, and he cast about for means of procuring it, when coming near to a large plantation, the buildings of which were revealed by the light in the windows. Dismounting, he tied his horse in the woods at the edge of the clearing, and started on a tour of observation. Approaching the negro quarters, he found an old darkey and his wife, who, owl-like, were sitting in their cabin door, evidently ruminating on things past and what the conflict then going on had in store for them and their race. Old Alf approached the old couple, telling them that he was fleeing from the "secesh," that he wanted food for himself and horse. The old woman brought him some corn pone and bacon, the remnants of their evening meal, after eating

which, the old man conducted him to the plantation stable, where he procured corn and fodder for his horse. While thus engaged their attention was attracted by a great commotion up at the "big house," where lights flashed, and officers could be heard giving commands. "Dem's secesh," exclaimed the old darkey. "Dey'll be down heah in er giffy fer fodah, fer dey horses; you jes' clah out from heah mighty suden," said he, speaking to Old Alf, who also thought it was about time for him to go, and gathering up the corn and fodder he disappeared in the darkness, first exacting a promise from the old man to come to him when all was quiet, and bring him all the information he could gather respecting the numbers of the enemy, their intentions, and where they were going.

Returning to his horse, Old Alf placed the corn and fodder before him, and then lay down to get a little rest, knowing that he must soon be moving. When the old darkey returned to his cabin, he was just in time to answer a call for all hands to turn out and bring feed for the rebel soldiers' horses. The old darkey made himself useful to the rebel soldiers, being on the alert all the time for such information as he might gather from their conversation.

He learned that the present force consisted of about 200 men of the Thirteenth Louisiana Cavalry, and from the house servants he learned that the officers, who were being entertained by his master, had stated that they had received information that a force of Yankee cavalry had crossed the river from Skipwith's Landing for the purpose of making a raid in that section of the country, and that they, the rebels, were concentrating a force further up Bouef River, where they would meet the Yanks, cut off their line of retreat and capture them.

When quiet reigned over the rebel camp, the soldiers sleeping in their blankets, the old darkey stole away and sought Old Alf, to whom he related all he had heard. The following morning, long before the rebel soldiers were astir, Old Alf was in the saddle threading his way through the woods and by-ways. He had been instructed as to the general course the command would take, and that, in case he had anything of special importance to report, he was to intercept the command by the shortest route open to him.

With the knowledge he now possessed respecting the intentions of the enemy, he realized the importance of making haste to rejoin the command and report the facts to Major Chapin. To intercept the command in time to give warning of the danger that menaced it, it was necessary to seek a short cut across the country. After skirting the plantation, he gained the road he traveled the day before, which he followed for a few miles, when he came to a road branching off from it, and in a more northerly direction, he followed it, but he had proceeded but a short distance when he heard the tramp of horses' feet behind him; turning in his saddle, he saw that he was pursued by a party of rebel cavalry, and, putting spurs to horse, he dashed away, a shower of bullets greeting him, which fortunately went wide of the mark. With a yell, the rebels spurred their horses in pursuit, but they proved no match for Old Alf's thoroughbred, and soon gave up the chase. By hard riding, pursuing a zigzag course and following blind trails across country, he joined the command late that night and reported to Major Chapin.

The command was marching in a northerly direction, nearly parallel with Beouf River, but some distance east of it, the intervening country being swampy, while the enemy were marching in the same general direction, but on the opposite side of the river. After hearing Old Alf's report, Major Chapin was anxious to gain some information as to the means of crossing the river, and Old Alf was sent out the next morning to gain this information. He was instructed to scout along the east bank of the river, note the facilities for crossing, ferries, etc., if any, and gain such information as he could respecting the movements of the enemy.

On leaving the command, Old Alf took a blind trail through the swamp, which brought him to the river. Following the river for some distance, he came to a ferry kept by an old colored man. This ferry was a very primitive affair, being simply a small flat-boat, which was propelled by means of a rope stretched from bank to bank. This ferry was for neighborhood use, and its carrying capacity two or three horses. By the payment of a liberal fee. Old Alf had himself and horse taken across the river, stipulating that the boat remain there until he returned, promising the old ferryman a good fee if he held the boat there in readiness for him; he wanted to provide for a hasty retreat in case he should be pursued.

After leaving the ferry, Old Alf proceeded through the heavy wooded bottom lands that extended some distance back from the river, and it was high noon when he emerged therefrom, and found himself in a cleared and settled section of country.

Coming to the intersection of two roads, he was startled almost out of his wits by the command, "Hold up, old man," as a Confederate cavalryman, with gun leveled, rode into the road directly in front of him. This sudden and unexpected interruption would have disconcerted a more experienced scout than Old Alf, but he was equal to the occasion, exclaiming, "Lawd bress me, massa, youens done skeered dis nigger out er year's grof. I done tol massa dat dem pesky Yankees gwine to capter dis chile, den he don' loss two niggers." "Whose nigger are you?" asked the rebel soldier. "Ize massa's boss man, I iz." "Where are you going?" "Don't I done tol youens iz arter dat wuffles nigger, Josephus, what don' run way, but dis er hoss don' play out." "Well," said the rebel soldier, "you will have to stay here till the Colonel comes up," and, bidding Old Alf follow him, he rode to the forks of the road, from which point they could see a long column of rebel cavalry approaching. Old Alf was startled at what he saw, but he gave no outward signs of it, but turning to the rebel soldier said, "Bress de Lawd, dem weans sojers," all the time, however, his brain was busy devising a plan by which he might extricate himself from his threatening position.

His only chance seemed to be in immediate and desperate action. He had a revolver concealed on his person, but any attempt to fish it out from the depths of his baggy trousers, with the keen eye of the soldier upon him, would certainly be followed with fatal results. The only other weapon he carried was a stout stick he had cut along the road that morning. To attract the attention of the rebel soldier, Old Alf asked him if the man riding at the head of the column was the colonel, and as the soldier turned his gaze in that direction, Old Alf dealt him a blow on the head with his stick, knocking him senseless to the ground, then wheeling his horse, he dashed away with great speed.

The advancing horsemen, witnessing the bold act, spurred their horses in pursuit. Bullets whistled dangerously close to Old Alf, but he heeded them not. Some of the pursuing party were mounted on thoroughbreds, and, outstripping their compan-

ions, held their distance with Old Alf for some time, but one by one they fell behind until but one remained, and he a dangerous competitor for the race. Though Old Alf urged his horse to his utmost speed, his pursuer slowly but surely gained on him, and it seemed plain that it was to be a test of speed and endurance between the two horses. Old Alf's horse was renowned for his speed and endurance, and, as far as known had never met defeat. Old Alf had trusted everything to the speed of his horse, his surprise, therefore, was great at finding himself distanced.

In his younger days, Old Alf had ridden many races, his master having kept a stud of famous horses, which he took to New Orleans in the racing season, in the good old ante bellum days. Old Alf invariably accompanied his master on these annual visits to the Crescent City, and, being a good rider, he won considerable notoriety as a jockey. In this race, however, involving the greatest stake he had ever ridden for, he used all the arts of the experienced jockey to distance his pursuer, who hung on his trail like an avenging nemesis. They literally flew over the ground, the long, even stride of the horses beating the ground in unison. Even at this critical juncture, Old Alf, true to his training and love of racing, deplored the loss of the race even more than the probability of being killed or captured.

In the meantime, Old Alf released his revolver from its hiding place and held it in readiness for instant use. His pursuer had fired several ineffectual shots, but he resolved to hold his fire until the last hope of escape vanished, then to turn and face his adversary in deadly combat. Fortunately, however, for him the road led through a densely wooded region, with many abrupt turns in it, the curves being so frequent that it was only at intervals that pursuer and pursued came in view of each other. Availing himself of this circumstance, Old Alf reined his horse quickly to one side on rounding one of these curves and fired as his pursuer dashed into view. At the report of the pistol the horse shied, the man reeled in his saddle and fell to the ground, while the horse now freed from his rider, dashed on at increased speed, Old Alf following.

On reaching the ferry, Old Alf captured the horse. The old ferryman was waiting for him, and getting the horses on the boat they pushed off and were soon landed on the other side of the

river, where, after getting the horses on shore, Old Alf scuttled the boat and pushed it out into the stream to float away, this work being barely accomplished when several of the pursuing party reached the opposite bank, from which point they opened a lively fusillade, but the distance was too great for their shotguns to carry, and they did no damage. Thus frustrated, their impotent rage found vent in hurling all sorts of imprecations on the man who had thus defied and escaped them. The old ferryman, being badly frightened, Old Alf bade him mount the captured horse, and together they rode away.

Old Alf rejoined the command late that night and reported to Major Chapin. The night attack and the bloody scenes that followed are narrated in another chapter.

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OLD ALF RUNS AMUCK.

*Indulges in Fire Water.—Shoots One of the Men.—Flees, and is Captured by the Enemy.*

In September, 1864, the regiment being stationed at Vicksburg, Major Cook, with about 300 men of the regiment, and one piece of light artillery, was sent into the Deer Creek country to break up the camps of Colonels Montgomery and Bradford, commanding the rebel cavalry in that section.

Marching from Vicksburg to Haynes' Bluff, Major Cook crossed the Yazoo River, a steamboat sent up from Vicksburg, ferrying the command across. Marching inland about ten miles, the command camped for the night.

Old Alf, being familiar with the country, he was detailed as guide. That the thought of returning to the scenes of his former life as a free man, and in the uniform of a Union soldier, filled him with a sense of pride and satisfaction, may, in a measure, be condoned, but it is to be deplored that his vanity got the best of his judgment so far that he overstepped the bounds of military discipline, in that he involved himself in a difficulty while in camp that night, the result of an over-indulgence in "fire water," which culminated in a reckless use of fire-arms and the shooting of one of the soldiers. Old Alf, being a creature of impulse, regretted the rash act as soon as done, and, fearing the consequences, his

next step was as ill-advised as the first, and with the smoking revolver still in his hand he bounded away with the speed of a deer, disappearing in the thick woods before he could be restrained. Running and walking by turn, he kept up his flight the greater part of the night, and in his haste to get as far from the command as possible before daylight, he took no note of his course, and was only brought to his senses by the sharp command, "Halt," as a score of rebel soldiers, with guns leveled, surrounded him. Old Alf had blindly run into a rebel picket post.

This was a decidedly precarious predicament for a "nigger soldier," and his career came well nigh being cut short right there. But it was not to be. The mysterious hand of fate, interposing, snatched him from what seemed certain death. Old Alf's time had not come, his career was not finished. He seemed to be one upon whom the seal of destiny was set, one who had a mission to fulfill, one over whom the hand of providence extended in watchful care.

While preparations for his execution were being made, it being proposed to hang him then and there. Old Alf stood mute, exhibiting the stoicism of his race, the Indian. The scene was a counterpart of wild savagery, the smouldering camp fires casting a lurid light among the shadows of the trees, presenting a grewsome sight. In the midst of this scene a thought, coming like an inspiration, struck Old Alf. With him to think was to act, and he stopped not to consider the points of honor involved; his ethics were, the end justifies the means, so without any qualms of conscience he exclaimed in well assimilated surprise, addressing his captors: "Bress de Lawd, ize don' got back wif my sure nuff friends. I thought fus dat youens wus some uv dem pesky Yankees what I done run all nite ter get way frum." Thus gaining the attention of the rebel soldiers, Old Alf went on to relate how he had made his escape from the nigger regiment, stating that he had shot and killed one of the guards in making his escape, that he had been pressed into the Yankee army, and that he had improved the first opportunity to make his escape from them. The rebel soldiers were so favorably impressed with this story that they at once pronounced Old Alf a *good nigger*, and sent him to the camp of Colonel Montgomery, that that officer might gain some information from him respecting the movements and designs of the Yankee cavalry that now menaced him.



On being taken before Colonel Montgomery, Old Alf entertained that officer with a graphic account of his escape from the Yankees, concluding by saying: "I tells you, massa cun'l, dem niggers arn't gwine ter fit, dey jus' gwine ter skimdaddle at de fus fire, so dey iz." He also made an earnest plea to be taken into the Colonel's service as his servant, giving himself a high recommendation as a cook, etc., and the Colonel, of course, *knowing all about the nigger character*, gave him a job to attend to his horses.

At the first glimmer of light in the eastern horizon, heralding the approach of a new day, Colonel Montgomery had his command in readiness to march, declaring that he would wipe the d— nigger regiment out of existence that day.

Old Alf was sorely troubled at the turn things were taking; he did not relish the thought of being mixed up in a fight against his own comrades, and, after seeing the superior force of the enemy, he feared the result. But he was greatly relieved when the Colonel ordered him to remain in camp and take care of his tent and extra horse. The horse was a fine thoroughbred on which the Colonel doted. As the rebel command, four hundred strong, marched away in the mists of early morning, Old Alf was sad and thoughtful, bitterly repenting his folly. For a time he busied himself in putting the Colonel's tent in order, through no sense of duty, but because he was restless and could not retain himself. Then he went out and made a pretext of grooming the Colonel's horse. Quiet reigned in the rebel camp, none remained but the sick and convalescent, and they were not yet astir. An idea came to Old Alf, the very condition of things seemed to suggest it. He returned to the tent and examined its contents, finding a pair of heavy revolvers, which he secreted on his person, then securing a saddle and bridle, he returned and put them on the horse, all the time looking around him and thinking. No one was moving in the camp. He would make a dash for freedom. Quietly leading the horse to the outskirts of the camp, he mounted and rode away, going in an opposite direction from that taken by the rebel command. He knew every foot of the ground he had to pass over, and calculated that by hard riding he could head off the rebel command and apprise Major Cook of their approach, though he would have to make a wide detour.

Old Alf was a good horseman, and he knew that it would not do to wind his horse at the start, so he rode along for a few miles at a moderate pace, then he tested the speed of the thoroughbred, and as he covered the ground with long, even strides with little exertion, he felt confident of reaching the goal in time to save his friends.

The sun was climbing high in the eastern horizon, in fact, was nearing the meridian, when he drew near to the point where he would intersect the road on which the rebels were approaching. Here he reconnoitered carefully, and convincing himself that they had not passed that way, he rode on at increased speed, with difficulty repressing the wild whoop of triumph that rose to his lips, but he found relief for his pent-up feelings in urging his horse forward at a mad pace, sparing him not. What was one horse, yea, a hundred horses, if he reached the goal in time? So on he flew, hatless and splashed with mud.

On the morning following Old Alf's ignominious flight from the regiment, Major Cook resumed his march at daylight, sending Lieutenant Geary in advance with twenty picked men, mounted on fleet horses, with orders to run down and capture all mounted men found in his front. This action was taken to prevent information of his approach reaching the enemy, it being Major Cook's intention to make a rapid march and surprise the enemy in his camp.

Lieutenant Geary and his men were moving quietly along through a thickly weeded region, when, as they were about to emerge into a small clearing affording a view of the road for some distance, a horseman was seen approaching at headlong speed. Lieutenant Geary quickly placed his men under cover of the woods, in a position to intercept him, and as he dashed in among the trees, Old Alf found himself surrounded, a score of carbines leveled at him. In his bespattered and disheveled plight he had not been recognized. Lieutenant Geary, on learning the cause of Old Alf's sudden appearance, sent him under guard to Major Cook. Profiting by the information gained from Old Alf, Major Cook made such disposition of his force as to best meet the attack of the enemy, placing them in the woods near the edge of the opening, with his right thrown forward so as to deliver a cross fire. Lieutenant Geary was ordered to advance with his

men and meet the enemy, make a slight resistance, and fall back, leading the enemy into the clearing, which being accomplished, the enemy received a terrible shock as they charged across the open field. But rallying, they pressed forward until the little field piece added her voice to the argument, when seeing that the tide of battle was turning against them, and being unable to reform their broken ranks in face of the withering fire rained upon them, they fell back into the woods on the other side of the clearing, where they re-formed and made a stand, but the little field-piece shelled them out of this position, and they again retreated, when a running fight was kept up until Rolling Fork was reached, where they attempted to destroy the bridge after crossing it, but desisted when the field-piece again opened fire. The damage to the bridge was soon repaired, and the pursuit continued for several miles. The rebel camp was captured and destroyed.

The magnificent bravery of the Confederate officers in this engagement was conspicuous, showing that they belonged to the chivalry of the South. Inspired by their hatred of black troops, they fought with a daring and dogged determination that for a time seemed irresistible. But against the superior discipline of the black troopers, whose officers held them under ready control, the enemy's assaults were unavailing.

Old Alf acquitted himself so well in this engagement that he was let off with a reprimand, the man he shot being but slightly hurt.

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A PERILOUS UNDERTAKING.

*Old Alf, under cover of a dark night, disguised as a rebel soldier, goes through the enemy's camp, picking his way among the sleeping soldiers, and takes a message to the Union camp.*

In the fall of 1864, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry formed part of a force sent out to scout the country between Vicksburg and Yazoo City. It was well known that this section of the country was swarming with rebel cavalry. The Union cavalry had frequently raided this region, always meeting with stubborn resistance, and sometimes with defeat. So when the destination of

this expedition became known to the officers and men, all realized that hard fighting was before them. The enemy, as foreshadowed by previous events, was encountered near Yazoo City, and in the engagement that ensued, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, being thrown forward, dismounted, to make a flank movement, was cut off from the main command, which was also defeated and driven back. Thus cut off and surrounded by an overwhelming force of the enemy, the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry took shelter in a small earthwork situated in a commanding position, where they maintained the position for twenty-four hours, repulsing several desperate charges.

The situation was desperate in the extreme. Never was a garrison in a more forlorn strait. The enemy, in overpowering numbers and confident of victory, refused to treat on terms usually accorded to a defeated foe. They regarded colored troops, however, as outside the pale of civilized warfare, and, filled with such sentiments, they rushed upon the devoted garrison in a blind fury to kill and spare not. On the other hand, the black troopers, inspired by visions of Fort Pillow, responded with yells of defiance as they met the onslaught of the enemy, hurling them back. Again and again the enemy returned to the attack, only to suffer repulse from the well-directed volleys of the black troopers. Thus the unequal contest was kept up until the gathering gloom of night enveloped the scene in darkness, when the firing ceased, the besiegers and besieged lay down to rest, sleep and watch.

The enemy learned, alas, too late that they had a foe before them worthy of their steel, that the scenes of Fort Pillow could not be re-enacted here. Heavy black clouds rolled athwart the sky, deepening the gloom that hung like a funeral pall over the scene. Not a star was visible. Not a sound broke the death-like stillness, where the wild storm of battle had raged so short a time before. Scattered over the ground between the contending forces lay the enemy's dead, whose distorted visages, as revealed by the occasional flashes of lightening, presented a ghastly sight. They were the bravest of their fellows, foremost in the charge—they fell in the thickest of the fight, just outside the breastworks. Within the little fort the dead were laid to one side and the wounded cared for. The officers held a consultation, discussing

the chances of cutting their way out by making a bold dash, and the probability of relief reaching them during the night. They were running short of ammunition, and it was certain that the enemy would renew the attack at daylight; some effort, therefore, must be made to relieve the situation. It was, however, finally decided to make an effort to communicate with the balance of the force, whose whereabouts and condition was unknown, or with Vicksburg, though this plan involved great risks, and was attended with much uncertainty, as the messengers must make their way through the enemy's lines. When this plan was decided upon and made known, there was no lack of volunteers willing to make the hazardous attempt, but only three were accepted, Old Alf being one of them, the other two being men of known nerve and shrewdness.

It was arranged that these men should leave the fort separately and in different directions. It was hoped that one of these men at least would succeed in evading the rebel guards and reach the Union forces. These men were given to understand that if captured it meant certain death to them, but they did not shrink from the task. As Old Alf was the only one of the trio who succeeded in the undertaking, the two other brave fellows being probably captured and killed, we will simply narrate Old Alf's experience.

After leaving the fort, Old Alf groped his way among the rebel dead that strewed the ground where the enemy had so lately charged. Stripping the uniform from one of the dead bodies, Old Alf took off his own and donned that of the dead rebel, also taking the gun and accoutrements. Thus equipped Old Alf was transformed into a veritable Texas Ranger, his long hair and lank form making the likeness almost perfect. Creeping along stealthily, screening himself in the gullies and washouts, often lying flat on the ground and listening, hardly daring to breathe lest the slightest sound or movement should attract the attention of the rebel outpost. In this way he passed the first line of sentinels. The inner guard was not so watchful, and he entered the rebel camp without incident and moved silently along among the sleeping forms of the rebel soldiers until he reached the rear of their camp, where their horses were picketed. Here he carefully reconnoitered for the most favorable point from which to get a horse. He secured a likely looking animal, bridled and saddled

him, when he was confronted by one of the guards, who accosted him with the question, "What's up now?" Seeing that the guard had mistaken him for one of their own men, Old Alf answered the man by cursing the luck that seemed to single him out to make a long night's ride, and, mounting, rode away. Making a wide circuit around the rebel camp, Old Alf avoided the rebel pickets and reached the Vicksburg road in safety, where he learned the whereabouts of the Union cavalry, and was soon in their camp, giving an account of the besieged position of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry.

On the first indications of day on the following morning, the boom of cannon on an adjacent hill and the yell of Union cavalry brought cheer and relief to the Third U. S. The siege was raised—the garrison relieved.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### LITTLE BOB, THE WAIF.

As we gathered around headquarter's mess table one day in the summer of 1864, all noticed that we had a new waiter, who, with white apron and sleeves, was dextrously serving the table. He was a bright mulatto boy about 14 years old. Inquiry developed the fact that he had been reared on the shores of Maryland, almost in the shadow of the National Capitol, that he had been a servant to an officer of the Twelfth New York Cavalry, and had accompanied that regiment from Washington to New Orleans, coming around by steamer, thence up the Mississippi River to Vicksburg. At the last named place he became separated from that regiment, and found himself adrift on the billowy waves of war's tempestuous sea, from which he was rescued by Old Alf.

The boy gave his name as Robert Butler, but he answered to the shorter appellation of "Bob." In fact, very few if any of the officers and men in the regiment knew that we possessed any other name, and should we introduce him here as Robert Butler, the survivors of the old regiment would fail to recognize in him "Little Bob" of the Third U. S.

Little Bob was very patriotic, as well as a zealous advocate of the regiment, claiming for it par excellence in everything per-

taining to the profession of arms. He was remarkably bright and intelligent for one of his race, civil and respectful to every one he came in contact with, and he soon found favor with both officers and men, and was regarded as the special portege of the regiment. Old Alf, though, assumed the guardianship of Little Bob, putting him through a course of discipline which, in more senses than one, left lasting impressions. When rebuked for his severity, Old Alf would say, "Ize gwine ter edicate that nigger ter be 'spectible. Dese little niggers got ter be licked 'bout so ofen er dey get wufless and no 'count."

In Aunt Margaret, however, Little Bob found a kind friend, in fact, a second mother. Old Alf assumed the functions of caterer and general manager of headquarter's mess, and Aunt Margaret, being a trained cook, he prided himself on the completeness of the establishment, and nothing pleased him more than to have some invited guests, officers of other regiments, to dinner, on which occasions he would say to Aunt Margaret, "We'll show dem dat our white folks is gentlemens if dey do blong to er nigger regiment."

Under Old Alf's tutelage, Little Bob became proficient as a table waiter, performing the duties with the dexterity of a hotel expert. Little Bob followed the fortunes of the regiment, sharing in its triumphs and defeats until the close of the war, or until the regiment was mustered out, when, with Old Alf and Aunt Margaret, he went to live on a plantation with Colonel Osband, in Mississippi, where, before the crop was gathered, General Osband died of a malignant fever. These faithful servants remained true to the last, ministering to the General in his last illness, and were grief-stricken at the loss of their kind friend and benefactor.

After General Osband's death, they went to live with Major Main, who was then operating a large cotton plantation in Arkansas. Subsequently, Major Main established himself in business in Little Rock, that State, Little Bob accompanying him. In Little Rock, Bob procured a position in a hotel, and later secured a position in the Pullman Car Company, where he procured good wages, and, being saving, he invested his money in a home of his own, married and settled down, becoming a worthy citizen of that city, where he is universally respected both by the white and colored people. Little Bob felt as proud of his first tax receipt as the average man would of a block of government bonds.

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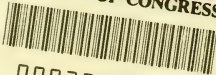






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